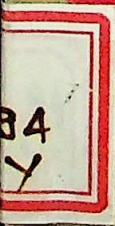
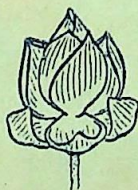


Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati

A Study



By

DEWAN BAHADUR

K. S. Ramaswamy Sastriar

[Retired District Judge, Madras Presidency]

गुरुकुल कांगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय, हरिद्वार
पुस्तकालय



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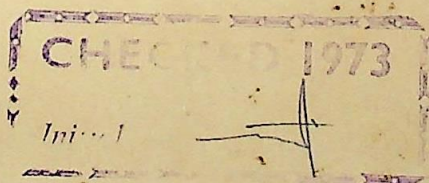
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YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

A Study

By

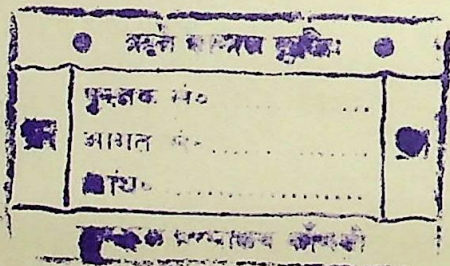
DEWAN BAHADUR K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRIAR

[RETIRED DISTRICT JUDGE, MADRAS PRESIDENCY]

First Edition, 11th May, 1947

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Today is the birthday of the Seer-Poet of the Tamil Nad—Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati. We are happy to present him this loving souvenir. This book is a well-merited appreciation of the life and poetic genius of Yogi Shuddhananda by the well-known savant and voluminous writer on Indian Art and Culture—Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastriar, the retired District Judge.

Sri Sastriar has made a keen study of all the works of Shuddhananda, and has written this beautiful treatise thus introducing a great Yogi and seer-poet of today, to the English-reading public. We are very much indebted to him for his timely contribution of this work to the biographical literature of the world. We hope that a study of this book will give the public a vivid and illumined picture of the Yogi who has made his entire life a sacrifice to God in the Spirit and God in humanity.

The quotations that abound in this work are all from the works of the Poet. Sometimes they are quoted from his original English and French; sometimes they are free renderings of his Tamil verses. Some of the epitomised translations bring out only the central idea of his long poems.

This work reflects the purity of the poet's heart and the godly perfume of his soul-thrilling heart. It is a living picture of the Divine Spirit which sings in the Poet.

Let him live an Immortal among the Immortals that have elevated humanity to the heights of Divinity!

May 11, 1947

PUDU YUGA NILAYAM
PONDICHERRY

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Yogi
Shuddhananda
Bharati

— A Study —

इन्द्र विद्यावाचस्पति
चन्द्रलोक, जवाहर नगर
दिल्ली द्वारा
भारत सरकार की पुस्तकालय को
भेंट



I. A GREAT POET

A GREAT poet is no mere writer of verses. He is a creator of life and superlife and a revealer of the ideal gleaming through the real, of the Divine shining through Nature and man. He appears to be a dreamer of dreams, but in reality, he is a denizen of a world which is more real and bright and joyous than ours. He is "a priest to us all, of the wonder and bloom of the world". He is an explosive force which often breaks up the bad old world to build the brave new world. In a famous lyric Arthur O'Shanghnessy says:

We are music makers
And the dreamers of the dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers
And sitting by desolate streams;

World-losers and world-forsakers
On whom the pale moon gleams;
And yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

It is thus true that poets, while seeming to be gazing away from the real towards the ideal, are

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

really helping to release the ideal from within the real and to build the Kingdom of God upon the common earth. As Shelley says in a famous passage in *The Defence of Poetry*:

“Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought.

Poetry is the record of the best and the happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. Poetry reanimates the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world.

Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.”

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar says in equally felicitous terms: “Poets are harbingers of the New Dawn, *Koils* of Renaissance, awakeners of new life in mankind and eye-openers of humanity. Poets are the sculptors of civilisation.

“True poetry is a mantra of the Real, dynamic song-thrill of Soul-Bliss. It is an immortal blossom of Divine communion which breathes with the aroma of cosmic beauty and Nature’s ecstasy. The true poet is poetry itself. He is the muse of Nature and the messenger of God in her heart. The poet’s vision is

A GREAT POET

far above the eyesight and the mind's vision. It is soul's vision of the ensouled Divine. It gushes out of the inner fountain of bliss and flows into an ecstasy of beauty, emotion and rhythmic expression." Swamiji says further in his *Seer-Poet* :

"Poetry is the art of arts. The ear enjoys music, the eye painting and dancing. But something deeper is required to enjoy real poetry. The head, the heart and the soul must go together to live within oneself what the poet has embodied in his verse. Poetry is not an array of words set to metrical beat. It is not a Johnsonian jingle. Poetry is a great formative power. It reveals the ONE in man, Nature, and the universe of beings. The real poet is a messenger of truth and a mediator between life and the Spirit. His song falls in dizzying streams of flaming dreams, from the pinnacles of the secret spirit. The poet is a creator of the creative world. His words flow from the mystic height of cosmic consciousness to cherish earth and humanity in all the spheres of life—social, cultural, political, economic, aesthetic, moral, spiritual and educational. It kindles a creative emotion in the nation, animates it with a heroic fervour, and a sense of beauty and harmony, love and unity, and inspires dynamic progressive action and activities. The seer-poet's poems are forces of universal evolution."

Such a seer-poet is Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati and I regard the above delineation as admirably and

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

appropriately applicable to his own poetry.

Shuddhananda is a *born poet* and poetry is with him a natural passion and a natural realisation. He lisped in numbers and numbers came even while he was a little boy.* He sings:

A mystic singer plays this flute and how, I do not know;
When the gentle scented zephyr plays prelude
To bird-voiced rosy dawn of peace;
When the occult smile that hangs on Aurora's lips
Kisses my silent wakeful self;
When the delightful rays of the rising sun
Strike the strings of my secret heart;
When the cosmic life plays before my eyes
In rapturous forms of men, women and children;
When the evening glory enchants my meditation,
When the star-gemmed book of eternal Knowledge
Opens above my soaring dreams,
When the midnight hush calls my soul
To transcendent heights of bliss,
A mystic singer plays this humble flute;
My songs, O friend, are His cadenced breath
Perfumed with the flowers of consecration.

Shuddhanand's poesy is the flowering of his spirituality. It is the Gangetic flood which comes from the Himalayan heights of his heart. His entire life is a

* We give only a free rendering of his sublime verses wherever they are quoted in this book since it is impossible to do full justice to the original in any other language.

II. A GREAT YOGI

YOGI Sri Shuddhananda Bharati was born of pious Brahmin parents, at Sivaganga, Ramnad District, Madras Presidency. His parents Jatadharar and Kamakshi, were learned in Sanskrit and Tamil religious lore and led a life of *Japa*, meditation and philanthropic service to afflicted humanity. Yogi Shuddhananda was born on 11th May, 1897, as the youngest of the four children. His parents and his grandmother Minakshi Ammal used to tell him stories from the great epics of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavatam, Shiva Puranam, etc. The atmosphere of his home was resonant with holy songs and chantings of the Gita, the Upanishads, Devaram and Thayumanavar's hymns. It was in that way that linguistic and cultural patriotism was imbibed along with his mother's milk. I know what such an experience has meant to me and I deplore its lessening influence in these vainglorious days.

Though Bharatiar studied in an ordinary English school, his home environment and his natural spirituality lifted him far above the secularism and hedonism of the day. In his seventh year his uncle promised to give him all his immense wealth, after

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

adopting him as his son. But Bharatiar said, "I am the son of Shakti (the Divine Force). Wealth! Your wealth too belongs to Her. Give it away to her hungry children in the street". The uncle then playfully asked him to go away to his Mother Shakti! The boy ran up to Goddess Minakshi's shrine at Madura, and sought the grace of the universal Mother. There he heard devotees singing Thevaram, Tiruvachakam, Thyumanaver's songs, and made a vow to compose holy poems and songs and place them at the Feet of the Divine. In his ninth year, he met a Guru who intensified his double gifts of poesy and spirituality. It was that great Saint who realised the purity of his mind and gave him the name of Shuddhananda, viz., the blissful soul pure in thought, word and deed. Tamil poesy flowed in a swelling stream from his lips. But he used to read it to the Divine in his heart, and throw it away. He had no attachment for anything except the Divine Grace. One day his Tamil Pundit Devasikhamani Iyer, happened to watch the boy, while he was writing on the wall:

Seek ye the Light Divine alone; all else
Will break off and then vanish like bubbles.

The savant forbade the young poet to destroy his poems and songs, and advised him to preserve them and master Kamban's immortal Ramayana. Bharatiar

A GREAT YOGI

did accordingly. He also read the hymns of Maharshi Thayumanar and Bhagavad Gita with great reverence.

When his parents proposed marriage to him nine times, he firmly said "No, I cannot imagine woman, except as the universal Divine Mother." He removed his sacred thread and became an anchorite. He sought the company of saints and sages, and shunned worldly attachments. In a famous letter to his elder brother at that time, he stated that he felt that all beings were his children and that he was born to dispel the poverty, ignorance and slavery, that seemed to be the lot of Indians on earth. He felt and argued that if any compulsion was applied against his freedom of thought and action, he would, in the interest of humanity and as a divine urge, rise in rebellion and revolt. He stated further in the above said letter, that his way was Pure Spiritual Socialism, and that he wanted to devote his heart and soul to God, and his hands to the service of Man. He regarded all humanity as an embodiment of God: Unity of God and unity of souls is the basic principle of his Spiritual Socialism. He sings in a long poem on Unity of Consciousness :

From clod to God, from sky to earth,
 All are dovetailed in me.
 I am bottom; I am zenith
 My life is ether-free.

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

God unites; mental man divides;
And yet one religion he needs;
Awake O Soul, and see who hides
Behind the veils of castes and creeds!

Awake arise and march onward
From peace to peace, my soul!
Blaze thy way beyond light and shade
To One that is the All!

* * *

Let's us think of that only Truth
Whose temple is the universe;
Then our path shall be very smooth
Among men of nature diverse.

Though he wanted to become an ascetic, he did not like the idea of going to others to beg for his food. He never begs even God for gifts. He would work hard and earn enough for his bare subsistence, and devote his care-free life to the disinterested service of uplifting his people. He fitted himself at Pasumalai for a teacher's life, the noblest of professions as he called it. While he was there, he studied the Holy Bible, and wrote a life of Christ in poetry. The Rev. Mr. Popley published it later on. Bharatiar admired the Christian missionary's zeal and spirit of service, and had a passion to do work in that spirit for the uplift of the Mother-tongue and the Mother-land, and for the propagation of his Pure Spiritual Socialism. He dedicated his entire life for the all-round

A GREAT YOGI

welfare of his motherland and its Dharma. It was during those days that he came in contact with the great Poet Rabindranath Tagore at Madura. Tagore heard some of his poems and encouraged him to enrich his mother-tongue.

He then took service as a teacher in Kattuputtur. While he was there, he used to go often to Nerur, three miles off, for peaceful and steady meditation, for one or two days, at the shrine of Sadasiva Brah-mendra, the supreme Yogi of the Tamil Nad in recent times. He was also a trained scout master, and took much interest in the scout movement. He used to take his students and scouts on excursions and teach them lessons on rural uplift, patriotism, right-ousness and spirituality and make them render help and service to the rural folk. He never took food without doing a good turn and dedicating a song or or two to the Divine to whom his life is an utter surrender. He himself worked for rural welfare and Harijan uplift wherever he went, and his works were well-known in the villages on the banks of the Kauvery river. He did admirable work in the field of adult literacy among the villagers and in the field of prohibition, and he made adults as well as children perform *Bhajana*. To sing the Divine glory and dance in ecstasy was his passion and he never blushed to sing and dance, even in the open streets. Many persons gave up meat, alcohol, and evil habits on

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

hearing his songs, which were full of the soul's message to the heart of humanity.

In his own class, he used to begin work, only after going round his students and blessing them to become heroes in life and praying to God fervently to make them supermen. He was an able and devoted teacher and used to teach his students not only their text-books, but also ethical and spiritual lessons, which left a deep impression upon their lives. He got them to take interest in manual and vocational instruction, and made them masters of one craft or another. He aimed at the harmonious development of the brain, body, heart, emotions, morality, aesthetics, industry and social efficiency both in his students and his scouts.

One day, while he was engaged in mixing chemicals to make match sticks, there was a sudden, dangerous explosion by which he was injured in the wrist. He providentially escaped worse consequences. The scar of that injury still remains on his left hand, and urges him on to fulfil his life-mission, while yet the soul breathes in his body. That incident made a deep impression upon his mind, and he felt that God saved him from death, for a life of dedication to humanity.

During the days of the Non-cooperation and Khilafat movements launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, he met Mahatmaji, and devoted himself to

A GREAT YOGI

his ideal of truth and non-violence and the simple life of sacrifice. During those days he lived in the local Mosque, read Al Quoran, wrote a fine poetic work on the Prophet and His teachings, and won the love and respect of several Muslim savants and Moulvis. He used to do regularly the five Namaz and live upon dates and milk. One day, he went with his Hindu and Muslim friends and his students to the Kattalai station when Mahatmaji was travelling to Trichinopoly. He offered his Khaddar garlands to Mahatmaji and then saw him again at Trichinopoly. He spoke boldly on political platforms and toured with Congress workers to do constructive work. School authorities, though they had much regard for his genius and holiness, did not like his political activities. He himself felt the shackles of slavish servanthship, and suddenly resigned his post one day with two pithy phrases: "Freedom calls; no more walls!" The teachers and the students presented him a farewell address, to which he replied: "I leave an arm-chair life, to lead a life of meditation and service. I throw off this coat and turban to be a free pilgrim of God's Truth. I leave this palatial building to live like wind under God's heaven. I leave school-mastership to be nobody's master, but to be a very simple and humble servant of God in the human aggregate. I leave a profession to fulfil the mission of my life. Let your blessings guide me from

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

sacrifice to sacrifice, until nothing is left in me except God, who is my pure Self."

Shuddhananda thereupon devoted himself to yogic sadhan at Nerur, and later at Talaimalai and Kollimalai, allowing God to lead his destiny. He had no care of the morrow nor of the body. Whenever hungry, he used to take two handfuls of Bengal gram, soaked in his Kamandal and three bananas, which he bought and he never begged from anyone anything. Wherever he went, Nature's beauty inspired him to poetic contemplation, and poems flowed from his heart like a cataract. He had no attachment, even for them; he used to leave them with a friend, and go away to fresh fields and pastures new. If the least desire or egoism rose in his mind, he would at once set fire to his manuscripts, or throw them into the river; and many poems met this fate, for there was room in his heart only for God, and God alone. His life thus sped, alternating between meditation and poesy.

By providential design, he won the friendship of the great hero and savant V. V. S. Ayyar and the great poet C. Subrahmanya Bharati who were then at Pondicherry. He came to know them first only by means of letters. Later on he met them. Sri V. V. S. Ayyar and Subrahmanya Bharatiar read Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar's *Bharata Shakti* and other works with great appreciation and admiration. He wanted to

A GREAT YOGI

take part in the daily Desabhaktan edited by V. V. S. Ayyar but just on the day when he went to Madras, Sri Ayyar was arrested and taken to the Bellary gaol.

A little later, Bharatiar, at the request of a bosom friend, became a teacher in a national school at Devakottah, on a pay of Rs. 50 p. m. He used to spend five rupees p. m. on himself, give ten to the poor, and save the remainder to form a fund on which he could live later on and render service to the Motherland. He used to spin his own yarn and weave his own cloth. He persuaded the villagers to spend their leisure in spinning yarn. He did a lot of work to produce Khaddar and popularise cottage industries. He left the school when it was proposed to convert it from a national school to an ordinary school. He spent considerable time in yogic practices and the remainder of his working hours in writings and philanthropic service. Every night he used to do Bhajan and hold religious classes.

Sometime later, Sri. V.V.S Ayyar founded a Gurukulam, at Shermadevi in the Tinnevely District and called the Yogi to assist him. Both belonged to the Bharadwaja Gotram; and the Gurukulam was named Bharadwaja Ashram. Yogi Shuddhananda after visiting Rameshwaram and bathing in the Setu, turned a new page in his life by entering the Bharadwaja Ashram. He served the institution with zeal and assiduity. He revised and completed his monumental

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

poetical work *Bharata Shakti*, which he had written in 1920. He also wrote innumerable patriotic and spiritual poems and songs, as the mood prompted and inspired him. He took a very considerable part in the editing of V. V. S. Ayyar's *Bala Bharati*. After V. V. S. Ayyar's sudden death under tragic circumstances, he edited *Bala Bharati* and ran the Gurukulam for some time, and was later on the editor of *Samarasa Bodhini* at Tanjore for some time. He devoted his time more and more to the constructive programme of the Congress at Pamani, Palayur and other villages. He also did humanitarian work to prevent the slaughter of animals in the name of religion. He established the Gautama Nilayam at Tiruvidaimarudur and conducted a magazine named *Tozhil Kalvi* (Industrial Education). He was also the president of the Palayur Shakti Nilayam. For some time, he edited a magazine called *Iyarkai* (Nature) at Conjeevaram. He studied intensively the Jaina and Buddhist scriptures, and wrote the life and teachings of Mahavira into a volume of poems called *Jinanandam*, and that of Buddha into a book called *Buddha Vijayam*, and a drama popularly known as *Buddhar Karunai* (Buddha's Compassion). He conducted an All-India Naturopathic Conference during the National Congress sessions at Madras. He also conducted a sanatorium and cured patients. He was for some time the president of the Naturopathic

A GREAT YOGI

Association, Bezwada. He was also connected with the Youth Movement of Sadhu Vasvani. He travelled in North India up to the Himalayas and returned to Madras to edit the Tamil Daily, *Swarajya*. He was then one of the platform leaders of the Tamil Nadu. He extensively toured the country on the Congress mission. But his vision was a Divine India (see his work bearing this name) and not a mere political country of the western type. He did not like the party politics of those days of mutual glorification or mutual vilification. He was not for the council entry programme of the opportunists of those days. He was for solid and useful action that would release the masses from poverty and ignorance. "India can be free only by unity of consciousness and dignity of unselfish service and never by vociferous cliques. To spiritualise, industrialise, militarise, and socialise the country, is the way to liberate it for the service of humanity," said he in his last leading article and left politics to devote himself to *tapasya*. It is said that he saw the vision of the Bharata Shakti once while he was delivering a political speech at Tuticorin. That effulgent vision made him feel the one Cosmic Divine Energy that pervades all and leads the human evolution. It changed his entire course of life and angle of vision. That was his last public speech. He got down from the platform and turned from political work to spiritual work. He did *tapasya* amidst the beautiful natural

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

scenery of the Mysore State, remained for a month in Belagola and then went to see Sri Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai. He lived in meditation and *samadhi* up the hill in the Virupakshi cave.

Some years ago, he felt an inner urge to go to Pondicherry and see Sri Aurobindo. He was attracted by his spiritual dynamism, and offered to him all his possessions. He has since been living a life of intense Yogic Sadhana and meditation. He wrote there a great and unique book called Yoga Siddhi, and another big work of Self-Experiments called Atma Sodhana. He touched up all the previously written works including the Bharata Shakti and also wrote many new ones.

III. HIS WORKS

A LIST of the works of Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar will be found to be vast and extensive. About five hundred precious books have been collected and about a thousand have been lost or destroyed by the author himself. One hundred and eighty books have been published hitherto.

There is not one aspect or department of literature in which he has not written and which he has not adorned: Love lyrics, lyrics of childhood, Nature lyrics, religious lyrics, narrative poems, epic poems, dramas, novels, short stories, essays, biographies, histories, commentaries, criticisms, letters, new proverbs, etc., etc., have flowed from his mind in a manifold and mellifluous stream. Even a list of his works will cover many pages. We may mention some of his very popular and soul-elevating works here:

Poems:

1. Bharata Shakti—15,000 stanzas, the epic of supermen.
2. Yoga Siddhi or The Gospel of Perfect Life

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

3. Deshya Gitam—a collection of national songs.
4. Munnetra Padal—Songs of universal progress towards spiritual socialism.
5. Tamil Kanai (Songs of Tamil Renaissance)
6. Kuzhandai Inbam (Lyrics of childhood)
7. Tiru Katchi—Vision of Mother India
8. Samaya Saram—the essence of religions
9. Anburudi—Divine fervour.
10. Arul Vellam—Flood of Grace Divine
11. Chidambara Gitam
12. Deva Ganam
13. Natananjali
14. Sanmarga Gitam
15. Sadhana Gitam
16. Manicca Pattu
17. Valayapati
18. Kundalakeshi
19. Amudam (Verse-novel)

All soul thrilling musical lyrics sung in divine concerts and ecstatic dances.

Narrative poems

Plays:

1. Kala Ther (Car of Times)—a poetic drama of social evolution.
2. Mullai manam—a love lyrical play.
3. Anandam—a highly literary drama
4. Dhyana Mandiram do.
5. Anbin Arpudam—Life of Appar dramatised
6. Mira Vijayam (Life and devotion of Mira Bai)

HIS WORKS

7. Vasanta Sundari—a social drama
8. Buddhar Karunai—life and teachings of Lord Buddha
9. Jayamani—a social humourous play
10. Rani Mangammal—a historical play
11. Pudumaiyum Pazhamaiyum — a humourous social play depicting the ancient and the modern customs.
12. Shivastram—a play from the Mahabharata
13. Kur dala Keshi
14. Valayapati
15. Nakkirar
16. Rana Pratap
17. Subhadra
18. Kali Yugam
19. Rama Dutan
20. Ramar Tyagam
21. Maya Man
22. Jayaviran
23. Nataka Kalai (Dramaturgy)
24. Natya Kalai Vilakkam (Art of Dance)

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Novels:

1. Anbu Nilayam—a high class spiritual romance
2. Suguna
3. Kalai Koil (The Temple of Art)
4. This is the world (Viraswami's autobiography)



YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

5. Dipa Jyoti or Light of Life Divine.
6. Kasturi
7. Adaptations of Victor Hugo's Les Miserables
and L'Homme Qui Rit. (Ezhai Padum padu
and Ilichavayan)
8. Puratchi } Romance of perfect freedom
9. Vidutalai }

Short stories:

1. Kadhai virundu (Historical stories full of love
and heroism)
2. Kalima and other stories
3. Nalla Kutumbam (Good family)
4. Kala Kannadi (Mirror of times)
5. Sadhu Javani
6. Stories for Children
7. Stories of Renaissance

Biographies

1. Ramakrishna-Vivekananda-Dayananda-Jyoti
2. Ramana Vijayam
3. Aravinda Prakasam
4. Arutchudar Vallalar (Life and teachings of
Mahatma Ramalingam)
5. Kavi Kuyil Bharatiar (Life and songs of
C. Subramania Bharati)
6. Varakavi Tagore
7. Mahakavi Kalidasan

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8. Mahakavi Dante
9. Shakespeare, Milton, Virgil, Goethe
10. Mahakavi Kamban
11. Periar Varalari (Lives of eighty great men)
12. Walt Whitman
13. Francis Thompson
14. Mahakavi Racine
15. Sage Emerson
16. William Blake
17. Marie Curie and Radium
18. General de Gaulle
19. Arunachala Kavirayar
20. Arumuga Navalar
21. Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Sama Sas-trigal, Gopalakrishna Bharati, Vedanayakam Pillai, Sadashiva Brahmam, Swami Rama Tirtha, Shankara, Maharshi Tayaumanar, Ramanuja, Alvars, Madhvacharya, etc.

Essays:

1. Tirunul or the Gospel of pure life
2. Chilambu Chelvam (Shilappadikaram in prose)
3. Tirukkural Inbam
4. Agastiyar Yattrai (humorous imaginary Radio speeches of sage Agastiya)
5. Man Today and Tomorrow
6. Tamil Renaissance
7. Paintamil Cholai (Tamil Garden)

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8. Kalvi Kadir (Essays on Education)
9. Our Lingua Franca—Hindustani
10. Anbu Vazhi (The path of universal Love)
11. Divya Jivanam (Divine Life)

Spiritual Works:

Gita Yogam, Essays on Yoga, Upanishad Rahasyam, Brahma Jnanam, Tirumantram, Shivajnana Dipam, Purna Yogam, Brahmacharyam, Dhyana Malai (Garland of meditations), Parmahamsa Lilai etc.

Sciences:

Udalurudhi (Robust Body), Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Ethnology, Geography

Grammar:

Iniya Tamil Ilakkanam, The Art of Poesy.

He has translated famous works from foreign languages Among his English works may be mentioned: Secrets of Sadhana, Yoga Siddhi or Gospel of Perfect Life, Integral Yoga, Sri Aurobindo the Divine Master, Towards God-hood, In tune with Nature, Mahatma Ramalingam, Alvar Saints, Revelations of Meikanda, St. Thyagaraja, Maharshi Tayuanar, St. Valluvar, A Seeker and the World he saw (autobiographical notes), Epistles of a Spiritual Pilgrim (Swamiji's letters), Divine India, A Text Book of Yoga, The Rights and Duties of Mankind, Thus Spoke my Heart (A collection of Swamiji's Speeches and conversations), Inner Communion,

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Hold Up Your Head!, etc. etc.

I had the rare privilege of writing an introduction to his Alvar Saints. The Bharata Shakti Nilayam has published some of his works and conducts for him a monthly of that name. Many of his works have been published by the devotees of the Anbu Nilayam, Ramachandrapuram. Swamiji started a spiritual circle while he was a teacher at Devikotah in 1923 and called it Anbu Nilayam. He held religious concerts and ecstatic dances and prayers and gave lessons on social, political and spiritual sciences. Years after, it reappeared at Singapore and then at Ramachandrapuram. The Anbu Nilayam is an unostentatious institute of pure devotees who print Swamiji's works and spread Knowledge everywhere. Many are benefited by the silent service of this institution. Whatever it gains is invested in further publications. Swamiji has written a beautiful novel entitled Anbu Nilayam which reveals the innermost splendour of his soul and the aims of his Ideal Home of Universal Love (Anbu Nilayam). Anbu means Divine, universal Love; Nilayam means home or centre. The central object of the Nilayam is to make life a love-offering to the Universal Divine. In the delineation of Anbu Swami the author reveals his noble self, in the famous novel. He sings there:

This is the Home of universal Love
Where hearts in inner communion live;

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Each for all and all for each exist
In this temple where work is God-worship.
They do not live for name and fame and wealth;
They live for truth and live in perfect health.
The wars of I-and-mine are unknown here
And each follows his conscience without fear.
God is the Master; all are His children;
All are the rays of one delightful Sun.
A grand spiritual socialism
Free from castes and creeds is their noble aim,
Blessed be this race of godly men;
Blessed be their endeavour! Amen!

Thousands know and respect Swamiji; but he loves to live unknown in a silent and purely spiritual atmosphere. He accepts no disciples and never in his life has he posed himself as a Master. He would rather be a humble student of everyone who can reveal him a truth. God is his sole passion and Godhood of man his vision. It is not my purpose to describe the prose works of the Yogi in considerable detail, as I propose to concentrate, in main, upon his poesy. But I must say here, that he has covered in his most elegant prose writings, the entire range of Indian achievements in literature, art, science, philosophy and religion as can be gathered from the extensive list of his works. All of them are meritorious. But the most valuable works are his Bharata Shakti, Yoga Siddhi, his sweet lyrical poetry and especially his patriotic lyric poetry and his spiritual lyric poetry.

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I shall discuss below the main aspects of his literary genius. We must be proud to possess a poet of such rare gifts, endowments, and achievements in Tamil Nad, which has been lifted to the height of international recognition because of the immortal literary works of Subrahmanya Bharatiar. The two Bharatiars are great personalities of Indian Renaissance. The leading traits of their poesy are sweetness, simplicity, and sincerity. Their Tamil prose has both limpidity and profundity, and is as remarkable as their poetry. We find in both a harmonious blend of the spirit of antiquity, and the spirit of modernity. We find further in them, the steady and radiant flame of real spirituality. Shuddhananda's literary productivity is amazingly large and as varied as that of Rabindranath Tagore and includes poems, hymns, songs, short stories, novels, playlets, plays, essays, research works, etc. He is still full of creative vigour and amplitude, and plenitude of literary self-expression.

Of all his works, Bharata Shakti is most luminous as well as voluminous, and consists of 15,000 stanzas. We have given its quintessence as a separate chapter. Shuddhananda has the true divine afflatus and feels and expresses the beauty of things with a consuming passion. He is in the line of immortal ancient poets of India, and is yet one of the finest voices of the modern age.

IV. SHUDDHANANDA AND THE TAMIL RENAISSANCE

THE genius of Yogi Shuddhananda can be understood in proper measure only when we appraise it in relation to the Tamil Renaissance, and realise his interpretation of it. Sri Subrahmania Bharatiar's passionate patriotic poems and songs had already blazoned forth the glory of the Tamilian achievement right through the hastening centuries. There was a widespread and far-shining efflorescence of Tamil literature and art. Tamil prose, till then rare and stilted, had become simple and supple, and Tamil journalism, late though it was, left its predecessors and contemporaries far behind in point of clarity and simplicity, combined with beauty and brevity. Tamil Drama lags yet behind though it is abundant, but bids fair to come to the front rank with resistless strides. Tamil music, once supreme but later under a cloud, has suddenly flamed with a quick and swift and steadfast splendour. All these results have, in a large measure, been the achievement of the Yogi's genius.

Thus Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar's genius flowered at an opportune spring time. His realisation

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and interpretation of the Tamil Renaissance are expressed in passionate, and beautiful words in Tamil Unarchi (Tamil-Consciousness). He points out in it that the Tamil genius has always excelled in literature and art, philosophy and religion. The sacred architecture of the Tamils has been one of the outstanding marvels of the world. It can be well said of them that they planned and executed works as giants and finished them as jewellers. The Tamil hymn-music is another of the world's marvels and no devotional literature—not even that of Sanskrit—can match it in poignancy and perfection. Yogi Shuddhanand sings with equal fervour:

This sacred Tamil land of mine
 This temple of the life Divine;
 This treasure land of fair Nature,
 Land of peerless architecture,—
 O how it entrances my soul,
 Delights my eyes and heart! I feel
 A thrill of God's omnipresence
 As its balmy breeze comes with hymns
 Of holy saints and seer-poets,
 That have inspired its arts and crafts
 And its spiritual culture,
 And urged on its adventure!

At one time the Tamil country lay far beyond Cape Comorin also, but the erosion of the sea

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swallowed up a portion of it. It was the cradle of the Indian civilization (nay, the world's civilization as well) and was the home-land of a mighty and heroic people who were born there, and who were happy and brave, excelling in the art of love and heroism and were equally renowned in the arts of peace and war. Their ships sailed the seven seas, their commerce spread to the ends of the earth, and they planted colonies in South-East Asia and Indonesia, and built up the great edifice of Greater India. Says the Yogi:

“Tamils are the most ancient race of the world, and their civilization once pervaded all the Indian continent. Tibet, Burma, Malaya, West Indies, Java, Judea, Egypt and the Mediterranean lands—all were influenced by the Tamilian culture and civilization. We find evidence of this fact in the works of Greek and Roman historians, and in the Sangam literature. All the sea ports of the ancient world eagerly looked for the teak-made ships of Tamil Nad, carrying our rich and fine cloths, spices, arms, pearls and other merchandise. Our trade flourished in the East and in the West. Tamil Nadu was once “Mistress of the Sea”.

Poet Shuddhananda has given us remarkable interpretations and expositions of the great saints and bards of the Tamil Nad from Valluvar to C.S. Bharati. His English works (The Revelations of Meikandar,

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Saint Valluvar, Alvar Saints, Mahatma Ramalingam, Sadasiva Brahman, Maharshi Tayumanar, Southern Lights etc.), and his Tamil works on Tirukkural, Shilappadikaram, Ramalinga, Tirumandiram, Tayumanar, Appar, Maniccavachakar, Kamban, Thyagaraja, Muthutandavar, Bharati, Ramana Maharshi and a great many other poets and saints cover many centuries, and they interpret and reveal the inmost intuitions of the masters of piety and poesy, adorning the Tamil Nad. I shall select for inclusion here only his famous exposition of Kamban, the King among poets:

“Planted in the beauty of Nature, Kamban’s genius sprung up with inspired imageries, put forth leaves of wisdom, and flowers of graceful art, and gave the world the richest fruits of poetic delight. Kamban, like Shakespeare, reveals the nature of man, woman and the world in all its details. Like Kalidasa he sculptures the beauty of universal existence in in the ecstasy of Nature. He is a Dante in vision, a Homer in thrilling heroics, a Virgil in painting scenes, and a Milton in the flow of a highly cadenced style. Above all these masters, he has a subtle beauty of sense and grace which is inimitable. Kamban has taken just the story from Valmiki; even in that he has made dramatic changes. The whole architecture of art, poesy, rhythm, metre, the whole ornamentation of word and meaning and chaste expressions,

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are his own. Kamban got an ore from Valmiki and fashioned it into the richest jewel that the universal Muse can be proud of. He took from Valmiki the gold of an ancient story, treated it in the fire of inspiration, purified it, and applied his own imagination and skill to make it into a shining Crown for the Queen of Arts."

The Yogi has seen and said, that the Tamil Nad has kept up the traits of material prosperity and spiritual vision in the modern age, and has also added new laurels to her brows. The Tamil country has stood in the forefront of the freedom movement launched by Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi. The Indian National Congress is the idol of the Tamil Nad. These forces led to the permeation of the entire Tamil people by modern political ideals and the political awakening in its turn led to a modern upsurge of literature and art. Yogi Shuddhananda points out in the above-mentioned work, how in the realms of journalism, fiction, short story, humourous literature, multiform essays, and poetry of a new type, especially patriotic poetry, Tamil Nad has peerless achievements to her credit. He points out further that the Hindi language and literature have stimulated the Tamil literary achievement. Says the poet:

"When thus Tamil was shining with a new vigour, and beauty and lucidity by national awakening,

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Hindustani entered the Tamil land. I should say it has enriched our romantic imagination, and the Tamil pen vies with Hindi in the excellence of short stories."

Our poet is always for new achievements and assimilations. He has great regard for old spirituality, and equal regard for modern research and culture.

A new feeling is surging through the hearts of all in the Tamil Nad, that the Tamilians—whatever be the diversity of their faiths, be they Hindus, Musalmans or Christians—must be one in their worship of the Tamil language, literature, and Tamil culture. He says that the study of English should in no way lessen the Tamilian's loyalty to his mother-tongue.

It is no wonder that the mind of such a personage is aquiver with a vibrant passion of affectionate admiration for Tamil Nad, Tamil Culture, the Tamil Nation, the Tamil Language, literature and art. Sings the Poet :

A nectar-delight thrills my heart,
 An electric force sweeps my veins,
 A divine fervour animates my being
 As I think of Thee, O Mother of nations.
 A passionate love fires my joy
 As I think that I am a brother of Appar,
 Valluvar, Kamban, Ilango, Auvvai and Maniccan.
 I hug thy soil to my fond bosom

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And kiss it with all my affection.
O peerless nation that once taught
Civilisation to the world,
Hold up thy head and march on to victory.
Let thy land be a limitless temple of art;
Let thy art be the splendour of divinity.
Let the immortal life-spring of thy poesy
Quench the thirst of aspiring seekers.
Let thy divine Energy dynamise our earthly life.

Thus his dream is to vitalise and divinise the entire
world through the spiritualised Tamil Culture.

His message to the Tamilians runs thus:

Forward, Bravo! March on!
O glorious nation!
Like a heroic lion
Hold up thy head! march on!

Strike at the root of fear
Know thy divine Power;
Don't give room to despair,
Heart of noble fervour!

Take good inspiration
From thy ancient glories;
And progress, dear nation,
To win new victories!

Let thy great language be
The language of the world;
Let thy Spirit be free
To be the new herald

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Of peace and blessedness,
Of hope and energy,
Of life in holiness;
Rise up with unity!

Rise up O Sun of Truth,
And march towards thy goal
To build upon this earth
The kingdom of thy soul.

V. THE POET AND THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE

WE cannot understand our Seer-Poet fully or aright, if we view him only in relation to the resurgence of the Tamil Spirit. Shuddhananda Bharati is essentially a fiery nationalist, who loves his country as much as he does God. To him the Tamil Renaissance is only a lovely avenue of the bigger garden of the Indian Renaissance. Most of the enlightened spirits in Tamil Nad feel today as ever before that the source of the upsurge of power in Tamil Nad is the same as the source of the upsurge of power in the rest of India. All India is one unit, formed by the same master-passion. Tamil Nad has given much to the building of Indian Culture, and has received more. The Northern and the Southern are the two aspects of Indian Culture. United India lives; divided it falls. If South India and North India are severed politically and culturally, both will suffer, languish and perish. So our Poet never separates the Tamil Renaissance from the Indian Renaissance. The late National Poet, C. Subrahmanya Bharati felt in the same way. He sang: "Long live

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Tamil, long live Tamilians and long live the splendid Bharata!" To him Vandemataram (Hail Mother!) was the supreme mantra and it meant the adoration of the Bharata Mata and not of Tamil Nad alone. He sang:

"Let us sing Vandemataram and bow to our universal Mother! Whatever be our destiny we shall share it equally. Let us thirty crores (now forty crores) live collectively or fall collectively". Thus he regarded the whole nation as one social, economic, political, cultural and spiritual unit and said that India was the best of all countries on the globe....

Yogi Shuddhananda has composed many inspired national songs. The Bharata Shakti Nilayam has recently published hundred and fifteen songs in a book entitled Deshya Gitam. He has also the same visualisation and idealisation of our motherland as C. Subrahmanya Bharatiar; but his ideal is not only a politically powerful India, but a spiritually dynamic India which will command the respect of all humanity, and lead the world from war to peace, from sin to virtue, from falsehood to Truth, and from manhood to Godhood through her Yogic energy. This he explains *in extenso* in his English work DIVINE INDIA. His *magnum opus*, the Bharata Shakti, is an inspired vision of India's Divine accomplishment for humanity. Before dealing with that new epic let us quote some

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of his thrilling National songs:

GREAT INDIA

Thy name is nectar-sweet
Great Bharat, self-centre
Of love and truth and light,
World-guiding holy Star!

The meaning of thy name
Is sea of compassion,
Thy form is Divine Flame
Heaven of Sage-vision!

Whoever we may be
By birth and pedigree
We're one body in thee—
Thy heroes, brave and free.

With word and thought and deed
We labour for thy fame;
Our hands bear thy standard
Against panic-blood-storm.

Mother of mighty sons
Famous in history,
We offer oblations
For thy soul's victory.

O golden-green beauty,
Sun-woven-smile of peace,
We live by thy bounty
And breathe thy balmy breeze.

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How our conscience blushes
When we fail in duty;
And our Spirit rushes
To fight for thy glory.

Mother kind and tender,
Manifest thy splendour
We shall see thee grander
And grander ev'ry hour.

We offer life for thee
And mingle with thy dust,
To win thy liberty
And be thy flow'r and fruit.

Thy gentle loveliness
Can save the world from wars,
And thy grace, O Goddess,
Can heal the human sores.

Foil now the tyrant's sword
With thy soul-force, O Truth!
And win hearts with thy word
And raise heaven on earth.

We hug danger for thee
We scorn despair and fight
So that men can be free
To bathe in thy God-light.

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Leave off castes and isms,
These are despotisms
Of mind, slave of ego;
Hand in hand let us go

To serve the Motherland;
Come brothers and sisters,
Before nations let's stand
Shaking off all fetters,

Leaving vital quarrels,
Brave and victorious
Bright with crowns and laurels
Sing then modern glories

Of universal Ind
And her divinised race;
Let all the world attend
To her prophetic voice:

"Live in Yoga with me
I'm Bharata Shakti,
The Spirit heaven-free,
Soul of humanity!

Be immortal children
Of my love and wisdom
Earth will become heaven;
And life a godly bloom!"

AUM! AUM!

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These are renderings of a few lines from his national songs selected from here and there. The India of his vision is described in his English book, the *Divine India*. His national songs are sparks of spiritual heroism, simple in diction, direct in expression, deep in meaning, clear in sentiment and sweet to sing and hear. India means to him not a mere territory; India is the symbol of Spiritual Force, (Shuddhah Atma Shakti), as he calls it in *Bharata Shakti*. It is the soul of all beings, and the energy of all lives. It is the strength which alone can liberate, elevate and rebuild India. "O my dear Mother-land" sings the poet, "thought of you sends me to ecstasy. You are the Truth, Light, the supreme Knowledge, the heaven of bliss upon earth, the entrancing beauty of Nature smiling green and gold, the queen of plenty, the bounteous giver of all gifts; you are the gentle grace of the soul's harmony, that can unite and lead humanity to universality of life Divine. Mother of saints and seer-poets, voice of Dharma, centre of divinity, rich in resources, flowing with milk and honey, adorned by stately hills and luxuriant river beds, resonant with the flute-voice of spiritual hymns, Mother of Earth, I bow to you. My life thrills with joy as I touch your soil. I breathe the spirit of the Upanishads, the Gita, and the Kural with your perfumed music-laden breeze."

"This is our Mother-land—Bharat Desh; it is

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the gnostic splendour that removes ignorance and enlightens the world. But where has her ancient glory gone? Why does this Mother of nations weep today? Where are her world-conquering heroes? Slavery! Poverty! Ignorance! Are these her nature? Should these devils suck her life blood? Where are the guardians of her culture and civilisation—Vyasa, Valmiki, Kalidasa, Kamban, Valluvar, Shivaji, Appar, Rajaraja? Is there not a hero to reinstate her upon her legitimate throne? If India suffers, Dharma suffers, humanity suffers. India's freedom is humanity's freedom and welfare. India's smile is the world's delight. Brothers and sisters, come, let us consecrate our life, art, strength and will to the Mother's service, and win her victory."

Bharatiar has given a constructive programme for the uplift and freedom of India in his *Divine India* and *National songs*. Sound modern education, industry, cultivation of arts, creation of heroes and savants, military training etc., all are there, and above these he wants to make Yoga sadhana a national discipline. Universalised spiritual life is his passion.

It is India's Spirit which radiates even today gentle peace to the war-torn world. It is spiritual knowledge that raised India and made it a temple of pilgrimage to seekers of Truth. India shall be free, and in turn free humanity from slavery, by her spiritual force. India's Spirit shall conquer the

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world's heart and establish there her Divine Kingdom.

"The Tamil land is like home to us, India as the street and the world like the city unto us. Let us live as a communion conscious of the one blissful soul that runs through all of us" says he in a verse. He hails equally the beauty of the green Cauvery-groves and the fertile Gangetic fields. The North and the South and the East and the West blend in his poems.

His realisation of the full force and flowering of the modern Indian renaissance is seen in his interpretation of the symbols and spearheads of it, viz., Sri Ramakrishna, Tagore, Subrahmanya Bharatiar and Sri Aurobindo. The poems that he has dedicated to saints and patriots of India—Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Dayananda, Ramalinga, Ramana, Sri Aurobindo, Tilak, Gandhi, V.V.S. Ayyar, Bharati, Shivaji, Guru Gobind Singh, Pratap Singh, Rama, Krishna, etc.—are attractive and revelatory.

The most irrefutable and outstanding proof of Bharatiar's all-India Patriotism, and his realisation of the beauty and perfume of the reflowering India, is his monumental Epic of Supermen (Mahakavyam), Bharata Shakti. It is really the inspired voice of India's soul. Says the Poet in his interpretative foreword:

"When the whole world is mad with blood-thirsty homicide, dropping bombs and heaping dead

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bodies, it is India our Bharata Bhumi, that worships saints and yogins. It is here that kings worship at the feet of sages wearing loin-cloth. It is here that sages from the Vedic Rishis, down to Ramana and Sri Aurobindo, cultivate and radiate the supreme Spiritual force. No country except India can boast of so many saints and sages. The very land is like a triangular platform meant for holy tapasya. There is in the North, Gauri Shankar where Shivashakti shines and in the south Kumarishakti, both radiating spiritual force. Between the Cape and the Mountain there are innumerable temples, ashrams, maths, holy places, numberless mahatmas doing Yoga and tapasya and the whole atmosphere of India is surcharged by their spiritual electricity.....

This Spiritual energy is the only safeguard of India. There is no Bharata Bhumi without this Bharata Shakti. The root, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits of Indian Communion are the expression of this supreme Divine Force manifested by pure souls. If the collective and harmonious life of all humanity is to be a reality, if our universal existence is to be a poem of supreme felicity, the world must worship Bharata Shakti and realise that spiritual energy by sadhana."

Bharatiar gives in his great epic the following inspired and sublime description of India:

"This is the holy land of plenty, whose soil is

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rich with flowers and fruits, whose life is cherished by nectar streams, whose hills are an assembly of sages, whose forest gleams are Gurukulas (Residential universities), whose seas are ploughed by ships, whose shores are heaps of wealth, and whose beauty delights our sight in every direction.

“This the magnificent country of sublime virtues, where the Vedas blend with life, heroism with charity and self-giving, love with chastity, mercy with sight, virtuous conduct with teachings, new with the old, divine grace with justice. This is such a magnanimous land—this holy Bharata Bhumi!”

VI. THE YOGI AND THE MODERN RENAISSANCE

THOUGH in the twentieth century the modern world has been devastated by two world wars, a little insight will make us realise that we are in a period of modern renaissance. Yogi Bharatiar has given in his songs a vivid picture of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Revolution which moulded and ushered in the modern era. He has given the essence of the Renaissance in his beautiful work on *Dante*, that Master Poet. Science put new potent weapons into the hands of humanity. If man has used them for purposes of destruction, he has used them for constructive purposes also. Distance has been annihilated; labour-saving devices have come; production has increased; and there is the possibility of a higher standard of life for all. If the garden is not fully in bloom, and if the bloom of modern renaissance is not seen equally everywhere, then the cause is to be sought in human selfishness and exploitation. Nationalism has drawn people together in specified localities, and Democracy has planted the banner of liberty and equality and fraternity everywhere.

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Shuddhananda has felt the beauty and the fragrance of the modern renaissance and is, while being a pilgrim of Eternity, a child of Modernity. He sings in his Tamil Kanak:

The swelling flood of time progresses on;
Why stand before it, folding hands, O man?
Bridge over it and cross the tide, O friend;
Ferry onward! From port to port extend!
No feuds of castes and sects! All men are one;
Let us live as a social union.

He thus emphatically affirms the brotherhood of man and the harmony of religions. He further sings:

The world is my temple; heart its sanctum;
All beings are my life; to serve them is my worship.

In his excellent work on the new poet Walt Whitman, we see and feel Bharatiar's keen perception of the modern renaissance. He praises Whitman's simplicity and universality and vitality. Whitman is the poet of the modern age and of the common man. He wrote:

Whoever degrades another, degrades me.

O Liberty! Let others despair of you,
I never despair of you...

My spirit has passed in compassion and determination
around the whole earth.

I have looked for equals and lovers and found them
ready for me in all lands.

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I think some divine rapport has equalised me with
them.

From this hour, I ordain myself loosed of limits and
imaginary lines,

Going where I list, my own master total and absolute.

All the past we leave behind.

We debouch upon a newer, mightier world,
Varied world

Fresh and strong, the world we seize,

World of labour and the march,

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

O restless race!

I do not doubt that I am limitless and the universe
is limitless. I believe materialism is true, spiritualism
is true; I reject no part.

The New Era songs of our Yogi-Poet breathe the
spirit of Walt Whitman whose poems he has trans-
lated with real appreciation. Shuddhananda transcends
Whitman in his superconscious vision of men and
things. He has entered deep into the blended notes
of freedom and joy of liberty, equality and fraternity,
of science and democracy and patriotism which form
the centre and heart of modern renaissance. His
muse soars far, high to the heaven of Vedantic
Socialism which views and knows all as a self-expan-
sion of the ONE. I shall quote here some of his
touching lines:

Gather all, O happy my selves,
Beneath the heaven's canopy;

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North or South or East or West
Let's love and live free and happy!
Gather, O perfect modern men,
Gather, O dynamic women,
Boldly new and boldly forward,
Boldly true in thought and word.

Tall or short or young or old.
Known or unknown, join hands
And walk with me through heat and cold,
Through thick and thin, in all the lands.

* * *

They insult God who divide men
With walls of this or that ism.
Come let us be supermen
Souls of saintly heroism."

In "The Footprints of a Pilgrim Soul" our Poet says:
"Confront danger, O bold Spirit and let thy smile of
serene peace scorch Despair. Go with the message of
Love among the loveless and bring the Light of inner
recognition to their darkened hearts, my Soul! Spurn
superiority complex and pontific arrogance! See God
is every iota of life on earth. Dare rains, dare the desert
summer and the arctic winter!

See the majesty of equal divinity in the humblest
grass as well as the tallest God on earth. Break the
limitations of egoism and sectarianism and be wider
and vaster than the sky, O bondless Self!"

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In one of his beautiful verses dedicated to "THE ETERNAL I", he says:

"I kiss thee, foe, with friendly lips;
I dare thee Death—Eternal I!
To my heaven, I raise thee, hell!
My sun embraces thee, O night.

Humanity, my other self,
The freedom of equal godhood
Is our birthright; wake up and know.
Know that we are one Spirit,
Ever new though most ancient.
Know that we are earth-clad heavens."

This is the equal-visioned modernism of the poet, modernism with the ancient spiritual basis and scientific superstructure holding all souls together in its limitless halls of pure spiritual socialism.

VII. THE YOGI AND THE SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE

YOGI Suhddhananda Bharatiar has not only summed up in himself the Indian genius in general, the Tamil genius in particular, or shown how he is a child of the modern age of science and democracy nationalism and international unity, but he is also in the forefront of modern spiritual renaissance. Spirituality has attained a reflowering in India and is bound, under the leadership of India, to leaven once again universal thought. "If humanity is not to commit suicide by its insane pursuit of the cult of power and exploitation, it must heal by Atmic Balm the wounds threatened to be caused by the atomic and superatomic bombs. Says our poet;

The tameless vital man's science
Takes him from bomb to atom bomb,
From inventions to violence,
From tanks and planes to fatal tomb.

In one of his English works, *The Revelations of Meikandar*, Bharatiar shows the quintessence of spiritual renaissance which has taken place again and

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again in India and has spread the fragrance of its re-efflorescence in and beyond India to-day:

“Man seeks the fountain of bliss. But he wanders after mirages. He wants peace. But he treads the path of bondage. He pants for liberation. But vital desire entangles him in misery. His pragmatic intellect dreams of world empires, and material millenniums. It divines the laws of the physical Nature. Science in its hands plays a double game of construction and destruction. It makes machines and engines for the human convenience. At the same time, it bombs and torpedoes human existence. It conspires to play at chess with the lives of millions. It makes of humanity cannon fodder. Bombs drown the Bible-voice. Infernal smoke chokes the free breath of man. Man has after all become a weaponed Asura.

Saviours have come and gone. But the world has not yet been saved from the ferocious beast in man. Blind passion, quenchless thirst, vital egoism, pitiless selfishness and falsehood have degraded man and made him a prisoner in the hell of misery and ignorance.

Is this life? Is this man's destiny? What is man? What is the world? Who lives in the body? How did it come? Neither life nor the world is in our control. Who moves them both? The soul seeks a bliss, a freedom, a light, a peace beyond the dark turmoils of life. How is one to attain that Bliss of Freedom ?.....”

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"Here is the end and aim of life. Man lives in his vital egoism forgetting the God in him and in the universe. He trumpets over a little conquest of the elemental Nature. He is quite ignorant of himself and his Lord. That is why he suffers and commits suicide with his boasted intellect. He has much externalised life, and must hence internalise it, and be centre-in instead of being centre-out. He must pass through a course of spiritual evolution, touch the soul and attain its Lord. How is one to do it? Our seers show the way." (p.1-3)

The Yogi's special contributions to Spiritual Renaissance are the note of practicality and the note of harmony. He has himself strenuously trod in the paths of *tapas* and *yoga*, which have had a unique origin and development only in India.

The Katha Upanishad says: "This Atman is not to be attained by discoursing on it, or by intellectual striving, or by intensive and extensive study. It can be attained only by those whom its Grace doth choose. To them it reveals itself fully." The intellect which is purified by Karma Yoga and full of keenness and poise and devoured by Dhyana Yoga aglow with Bhakti Yoga and illumined by Jnana Yoga can attain communion and union with the Over-Soul and become one with the cosmic Consciousness and reach this eternal infinite supreme bliss of Beatitude.

Our Yogi-Poet has rigourously trained and disciplined himself throughout his life in this direction

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even from his very boyhood. On the intellectual plane he has practised and realised complete catholicity of religious outlook and felt that different aspects of Truth have been enshrined in the diverse philosophies and religions of the world.

He says in his valuable work, *The Revelations of Saint Meikandar*:

"These are days of equality when everyone proclaims that his faith is universal. While declaring this, he cries down the faith of another. The selfish egoism of man cannot tolerate the better. That is why we are divided into so many religious camps. Religions have shed so much human blood, and have so disturbed the peace of humanity that people are tired of them, and have lost confidence in their healing power. The spirit is lost; only the dull formalities linger on. The pearls of life have lost the string of the harmonious spirit. Man has lost God-consciousness, and lives in body consciousness; he lives for the stomach; he acts impelled by the divided mentality, fed with the I-and-mine consciousness. That is why he suffers from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. That is why he could not find the peace imbedded in his heart. Mere books and lectures will not do. Man must live in the Truth. He must obey a higher power and submit to its guidance. There is a Power indeed that opens the eye of the ignorant soul and leads it from darkness to light,

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from sin to virtue, from humanity to divinity. It is the Divine Power. That Power is one with the Divine. It is His manifesting Force, the rays of His supreme Light. It is through that gracious Power that the supreme, featureless, immaculate, immortal Divine is omnipresent and omnificent. This Power or Shakti is the Conscious Force in everything, from the inert stone to the mental man. Existence is a progressive evolution of consciousness which sleeps in the stone, feels in the plant, senses in the animal, and thinks in man. In the mental man, this consciousness is covered by egoism, desire, and the results of actions. He is like ore from the mine. The ore has to pass through the fire of love and worship before it becomes gold. The gold has again to be purified in the flames of the Divine Grace before it can become a shining jewel of divinity. The soul of man has to pass from bondage to freedom, from falsehood to truth, from ignorance to knowledge. The Jiva, in short, has to attain Shiva by a steady process of evolution. That is its consummation

The one philosophy that leads the human soul to its divine consummation through graded process, is the Siddhanata. Many at present know about the Vedanta which regards the self as the Brahman and the world as illusion, and self-immersion as the highest state of consciousness. Time has come again for the world to know about the other dynamic system of

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philosophy, which is the great heritage of India. Siddhanta is an ancient system of philosophy. Even now, consciously or unconsciously, a majority of Indians follow it. Most of the Dravidians are Siddhantins. The temple worship from Cape to the Mountain in this land of shrines is based upon Siddhanata." (Pages 16-9)

A specially noteworthy truth which is urged and proved by the Yogin is the spiritual harmony of the Vedanta and Siddhanta systems of philosophy. His life itself is a synthesis of both. At a time when we are deaf with the din of controversy about their relative merits and superiorities, we are delighted by such a flute-call of harmony. Bharatiar makes us realise also the essential and underlying unity of the Vedas and the Agamas—a truth which I have tried to elaborate and enforce in my work 'The Light of the Agamas.' He says:

"The Vedas and the Agamas are the two eternal sources of Divine knowledge that lead man to God. 'Veda' means Knowledge that leads man to the Divine. 'Agama' means the Divine approach. Both accept the Divine essence in man, and the goal of life as the Divine at-one-ment. Both are the centripetal and the centrifugal forces of the Supreme Truth. The Vedas teach us about the ceremonies conducive to mental purification, the modes of divine worship according to individual predilections, and throw light upon the

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path of Knowledge that leads to the Divine. The Upanishads are the brain of the Vedas. They are rapturous and spontaneous hymns of self-realisation. They are the crown and goal of Knowledge, otherwise called Vedanta. Vedanta teaches "Thou art That, Thou art Brahman. Be That." And with that it sinks into silence.

It is very difficult for the imperfect man full of mental and vital defects to be That, to be divine at a stroke. There is much muddling of the truth of the soul and that of the Divine by the human egoism. Another clear path is necessary to purify him and lead him gently to Divinity. That path is Siddhanta, which is the crown of the Agamas... The Agama Siddhanta reveals a graded path for the perfection of man and woman. It is supremely useful for the harmonious life of the nation. All temple worships from Cape to Kailash are essentially based on it. The Agama Siddhanta is a veritable encyclopedic science, to which a galaxy of writers have contributed admirable works in Tamil and Sanskrit, the two sister languages of India in which her spiritual treasures are stored..... What Gita is to the Mahabharata and Brahma Sutra to Vedanta, Sivajnana Bodham is to Siddhanta. It is the quintessence of the vast science of the individual, the universal and the transcendent realities." (p.4-7)

In another eloquent and beautiful passage he says; "Siddhanta is a largely synthetic philosophy, all-

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inclusive and towering above all, as the unique system which leads the soul step by step to Shivahood. It includes all other religions from atheism to theism, from the most rank materialism to the absolute monism. It considers all religions as so many steps necessary for the evolution of the soul. It lags behind no modern philosophy which speaks of evolution, monad, élan vital etc. It is the most perfect treatise on the triple entities of God, Soul and the Universe. It is the real Advaita which purifies the soul and unites it with God like salt in water, fire in red-hot iron and juice in the fruit. It does not deny the objective reality. It does not pull life off the Spirit violently for the sake of sudden salvation. It uses body, mind and earthly enjoyments as a process of purification through experience. It throws a clear light upon the cosmic reality, and explains, in unequivocal terms, the play of the Divine Grace in the universe. It does not run away from Nature. It faces physical, vital, and mental nature, and uses it in the process of purifying the lust-and-ego-laden soul. Like a gentle mother, it takes the human soul from the objective to the subjective realisation, from the separative ego to cosmic consciousness. It begins with the moral discipline, worship and disinterested service. It traverses the field of Yoga, and rises to the height of Knowledge where the Jiva attains Shivahood. It is a synthesis of the triple path of Knowledge, Love

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and Work. From top to toe, it is equal-visioned. Its Grace is for all without any caste or race difference. It equally adores, Nanda the Harijan, Kannappa the hunter, Nilakantha the potter, Karaikal Ammai the Vaishya saintess, Mangayarkarasi the Pandya Queen, Appar the Vellala, Sundara the Adishaiva, Sambandha the young Brahmin and Manicca Vachakar the Brahmin minister; for through all these souls runs one stream of Divine Bliss." (p.19-21)

VIII. THE SECRETS OF SADHANA

IN the *Secrets of Sadhana*, our Yogi gives a vision of his ripe synthetised religious thought. He says:

"The human soul struggles through the levels of Destiny, through a thousand vicissitudes of life, to pour itself into the unique ocean of peace, bliss and truth." (p. 3)

"Once man touches God, the blinds shall fall, freedom shall come, truth shall dawn, and joy spring up from the heart's core. God is our heart's Beloved. To believe and love Him and live in His consciousness is the first step of Sadhana". (p. 6)

"Any sadhana worth its name must touch the heart and the head. The mind must concentrate upon the Divine Spirit and the heart must feel its Flame—that is the secret of success in Sadhana. No Sadhana that does not touch these two centres of our being is perfect". (p.6)

In another excellent passage he sums up the sadhanas in his own way which is unique and complete:

"Purity of food and body, of thought word and act, truthfulness, harmlessness, sex-purity, holy company

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or solitude, control of the eyes, ears, tongue, temper and the sex-passion, firm faith in God, taking His name, humility, desirelessness, reading and hearing holy scriptures, serving saints and sages, absolute obedience to the one who is accepted as the Guru—these are the fundamentals of Sadhana which no seeker can dispense with whatever be the method of his Sadhana. (p. 9) A Guru is needed, because it is through him that the Divine Grace manifests itself. (p. 10)

The Yogi then proceeds to describe the ten sadhanas as prescribed by a person's Guru or as prompted by his conscience. He then refers to Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga and Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga. He refers also to the Tantra Yogi who rouses his Kundalini Shakti. He says wisely "the path of Tantra has its dangers; and none must approach it light-heartedly or without expert guidance." He develops this theme further in his work entitled *POWER*

"Yogins devote a great part of their life in the awakening of the Cosmic force. Tantrics take for their help a female force. But I have to say as a matter of warning that no woman must be touched except one's legitimate wife. Many people have become immoral wrecks and hopeless drunkards and flesh-eaters in the name of Tantra. No sadhana that dares to pollute the soul with drink and debauchery can lead man or woman

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to happiness. Kundalini Shakti can be very easily awakened by deep meditation and pranayama and purity of life and inner reflection (Jnana Vichara). Family men can meditate with their wives pure in heart, in pure surroundings, after ablutions. The wife can be adored as Shakti and the husband as Shiva. This is Shuddha Tantra. This will awaken the cosmic force in both and lead them on to self-realisation. Power comes by purity of life and by meditation."

He describes in a thrilling passage, his own innermost experiences of the bliss of meditation:

"Concentration is the first step towards meditation. Concentration can very well be attained by fixing the gaze and the mind upon a chosen form of Divinity, Ishta Devata, upon a flower, upon stars, the in-going and the out-going breath, or upon the heart-beats. The star and the flower must be considered as the smile of the heart's Beloved; the sky and the earth as the home of the Divine, and the heart as the sanctum of God. Everything must be taken in its introspective sense. That is the thing necessary in concentration. If meditation is fixed in the heart centre, no external image is necessary; then all worship is psychic, done to the One Purusha in the heart, through the flow of consciousness. Meditation for six continuous months will awaken the cosmic force and then one has simply to be conscious of the force and the Sadhana will be going on of itself. That was my experience in my

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teens. This growth of consciousness merges the mind in the self and gives the Bliss sought for."

In his brief and bright aphoristic masterpiece, YOGA SIDDHI, the Yogi describes very well his Shuddha Yoga sadhana and its supreme realisation. This monumental work has been beautifully translated into English by the author himself. He says in it:

Here I am, the Pure One calls Thee in;
Plunge into heart silently and attain.
To be ever in the ever-lasting One
Is to live on for ever like the Sun.
Think and think until you think no more;
And be the Divine Self in psychic core.

He says with equal clarity of vision:

"Surrender is the safest path, conscious surrender to the Divine in the heart. Surrender is a synthesis of love, work and knowledge. Mere mechanical surrender will not do." He then proceeds to lay down in a clear and comprehensive manner, all the aspects of surrender though mechanised *Prapatti* (Surrender) of these days have forgotten them:

"The body must learn humility, obedience and service to the Master of Existence, in the spirit of worship. The vital must be strong enough to support the Sadhana and must chase off egoism, desire, passion, lust, envy, greed, ambitious self-sufficiency, pride, etc., from the nooks and corners of the being, so that it is

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perfectly plastic and smooth, yielding to the touch of the Divine Grace. No personal ambition, no egoistic demand, must stain the purity of the surrender. The mind must be thoroughly purified and made steady; all its emotions must yield to the one fiery aspiration to attain God. Egoism must be given a death blow. The Sadhak must feel the Divine that acts through the human instrumentality. The Divine is the Life in the vital, the Thinker in the mind, and the Bliss in the heart. The feelings of 'I and Mine' are deadly enemies of Sadhana. The least trace of them undoes all that has been done. The Sadhak must always consider that he is something only by the Divine Grace which is everything.

The Buddhi or the intellect must discriminate and accept only Divine movements. The mind (manas) must hold the senses in strict control. The mind is the sensorium. It must sink into the heart; that is real inner surrender. The heart must always be conscious of the Divine. It must feel the vanity of the lower movements and must love the One who alone deserves to be called the Beloved. When true love touches the heart, then the way becomes very smooth and all difficulties cease to be. Then the Beloved takes the lover in his arms; and He leads the lover onward.

When the mind is merged in Him, when the heart loves and feels Him, when the body no more indulges in the vanities of passing pleasures, when the Sadhak

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feels that God is more indispensable to him than life and breath, then he is reborn in the Divine consciousness. Then the Grace descends, the supreme Light pours into him, and the Divine Will works. Then he sees how the Divine does everything through his instrumentality. It is the Divine that breathes through his lungs, speaks through his voice, loves through his heart, thinks through his mind and enjoys bliss through his soul. This is the acme of surrender. The sadhaka lives in the Divine and the Divine lives in the sadhaka. This is Realisation, thus to live, move and have one's being in the Divine." This is the heart of the Gita. Shuddhananda in his illuminating commentary on the Gita (Gita Yogam) works out a synthesis of all paths of God-realisation.

The above passage is in an exalted and sublime mood which sums up the spirituality of the Yogi Bharatiar and the essence of modern spiritual renaissance. It leads up to the sublime passage which is entitled: "The Soul's Call":

"This body is inert; Thou breathest in it as Life. Beloved, let me always feel Thy embrace in my psychic being. Let nothing be left in me except Thee. Omnipotent Lord, even when I am one with Thee in trance, let me never suppose that I am ever equal to Thee. I am only an embodied drop in the limitless ocean of Thy Spirit."

Some regard surrender as mere pacifism or passivity.

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But it is divine activism and energising. Bharatiar says: "Passivity is a burning rest; it is the silent inner dynamism, the activism that secures energy for the Divine work."

He refers to another aspect of the divine Sadhana which we are prone to forget or ignore: "Have no burden of disciples, followers, admirers. Likewise let not the behaviour of others disturb you." Our Yogi never considers his followers as disciples nor expects them to bow to him. "Worship the Divine alone and feel him in the heart", is his warning. He sings:

I am a symbol of His Truth;
I am a gate; not wall;
I am a guide and not a myth:
I am man like you all.

Switch on thy simple spotless love;
Start inner communion;
The heart will show the truth above,
By psychic union.

He teaches in his own unique way that everyone must feel the Divine Self: "Every tree has its natural flowering. So every man has his own mission in life flowering out of his soul's potentiality. Be yourself. The Divine inspires you from within. Keep deeply

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quiet, watching His call." Sings he:

I sit alone composed and calm—
A trance-flame of silence;
The splendid light of inner charm,
Reflects my renaissance.

He advises us not to be tempted by psychic powers but move on further in the path of Sadhana. Bharatiar gives excellent advice in the matter of food, drink, sleep, cleanliness, etc., in his precious work entitled "*In Tune With Nature*". We have quoted a verse from that book in the final chapter of this book. It sums up his ideal of *Life Natural* which he is living ever since his infancy. It would be interesting to note that our poet is content with fruit and nuts for his diet. He advises further "Read less; meditate more; eat less; work more." In an excellent passage he asks us to rise from height to height of God-Love till we feel Him as one with our self. He says further that there is no sex or duality or modes in Godhood. "God is the transcendent Para Brahman, the universal Viswa Brahman, and the individual Jiva Brahman. Unite with God in all these triple states. You can be one with Brahman, in Himself, in the world and in yourself". He says finally that shuddhi (purity), mukti (freedom) and samatvam (equality) are the essence of sadhanas. It is these ideas that shine out in Bharatiar's descriptions of Sadhakas and Siddhas

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such as Valluvar, Meikandar, Manicavachakar, Appar, Tayumanavar, Ramalinga, Sada shiva Brahmam, Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi, Sri Aurobindo and others. Swamiji met his first Guru in his boyhood; from him he learnt meditation and self-reflection. In his twentieth year he realised his Self and has lived all his life in that consciousness. From Bhagawan Raman Maharshi he obtained the secret of self-fixity in the silence of the psychic heart, care-free, world-free and body-free. From Sri Aurobindo he learnt the synthesis of life and yoga so that the meditation goes on even while his pen moves and his body acts.

I may quote in conclusion a beautiful passage which occurs in his Sadasiva Brahman and which fuses and synthetises the Godward sadhanas:

“To live in the Divine Consciousness is Life Divine. To act in that consciousness is Karma Yoga. To love that in the self and in the All-Self is Bhakti Yoga. To know that is Jnana Yoga. To enjoy its blissful Shakti, the Brahma Chetana is verily the true Tantric Yoga. To melt into it is Laya Yoga. To be that is immortality—*Amritatvam* of the Upanishads. That is the Sachchidananda. This is the most ancient knowledge preserved for us.”

I wish to add also his lovely poetic prayer:

This is my fervent prayer unto Thee
O Blissful Lord of Light and Energy:

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Let the good flourish and enlighten earth
With wisdom arts and crafts and divine Truth.
Let envy, falsehood, and talebearing, cease
And wars of castes and religions perish.
Let the demon forces that make the world
A bloody battle-field, vanish root and branch;
Let all beings live as one soul-commune;
Let life be crowned with Divine Bliss and Love,
Let words be sweet and true and acts compassionate;
Let us give, and live, and serve the Divine cause.
Let heroic freedom bring victory
To faith and truthful endeavours, O Lord,
Glory to Thee and thy Universe!

IX. HIS PATRIOTIC FERVOUR

"IN our home at that time", says Rabindranath Tagore, "a cascade of musical emotion was gushing forth day after day; hour after hour, its scattered ray reflected into our being a whole gamut of rainbow colours. This was how I stepped into my twentieth year." Our poet says, "My home was a power-house of vibrating devotional songs; my street re-echoed with Vedic chants and Bhajans; my town was resonant with patriotic thrills and aesthetic spirit. I drank the atmosphere along with Nature's inspiration, and sat like a self-gathered bud in meditation; and my heart opened like a sweet smelling blossom and Poesy hummed around the honey of Love Divine. Home made me wise and the world made me a poet."

Thus our Yogi became a many-sided poet. His 'Bharata Shakti' is a great achievement, a gift of God in Nature. His spiritual and aesthetic feelings blend in it, into a state of incandescence and give us a glowing chart of India's inner and outer achievements through the ages. All his other poems sing about the passionate moods which surge in the human heart at all times, and in all climes. His love for

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children, his love of perfect freedom for the self and for the country, his passionate love of Nature and intimate appreciation of human beauty, his spiritual socialism and synthetic attitude towards religions and systems of philosophy, are all clearly brought out in his songs a list of which we have already given in chapter three. His songs have not only a bewitching beauty, but also a bewitching divinity. They seek to transmute the lead of worldly life into the gold of spiritual life. His poetic imagination radiates his spiritual ecstasy and makes his art an unfading blossom fragrant with the divine aroma.

But I would give the palm to his patriotic poems which plead for a new manliness, a new heroism; a new spirit of equity and equality. I shall quote at random a few of his charming lines afire with patriotic feelings. He calls his countrymen to hold up their head and march towards glory:

Hold up thy head brother
High like a temple tower
And please our sweet Mother
By deeds of true valour.

A hill may quake one day
But not our brave resolve;
Ev'n rocks blocking our way
Shall crumble and dissolve.

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Laughing away danger,
Defying death and pain,
Bearing thirst and hunger,—
This battle we shall gain.

Blow, conch of unity!
Waft high, O flag of Truth!
Listen, Humanity!—
Sincere Love is strength.

The poet wakes up his countrymen to push forward
and conquer the time spirit, and bring honour to
their country.

The Mother's smile leads us
From light to brighter light
Her flame in us rises
From height to higher height!

Awake, arise, my countrymen
Harken the voice of time;
Behold, how nations progress on,
Come! Let's keep pace with them!

Would you beg at the door of Pride,
Lords of limitless wealth?
Would you sleep off thy days and hide
Thy face, and shut thy mouth?

March on soldiers of liberty
From glory to glory,
From harmony to harmony
With peals of victory.

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Add lustre to the charming name
Of our Queen-Mother;
March on brave sons, from fame to fame
Inspired by her banner.

Bharatiar glorifies the Tamil-land, Tamil and the Tamil nation with the same vigour and patriotic fervour as he does India and the Indian nation. He brings out in his poems their intrinsic merit and spiritual grandeur. I shall quote a few lines:

This is the golden land that gave us birth
Dearer to us than our life and breath.

This is the richest garden of Nature
And the greatest land of godly culture.

The land of plenty
The land of bounty,
Of loving service
And of sacrifice.

Its heart is love, its head is divine light,
Its word is truth, its act is what is right.

Its hand is gift, its sight equality,
Its ladies are a flame of chastity.

This is the land hallowed by holy saints,
Heroes, and intellectual giants.

Its Vedic chants and drums of victory
Thrill the nooks and corners of earth and sky.

This is the New Eden, heaven on earth,
Whose very air gives us delight and strength.

This is the land which holds to human lips

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The flowing cups of full immortal bliss.
We live united in this charming land
And put forth our heart and head and hand
To make it free and bring its victory
Which is the glory of humanity.

He dedicates a thrilling aubade to the Mother-land.

The hymnal strain of flute-voiced breeze
Plays aubade before thy court-yard;
Fresh honeyed blossoms feed the bees,
The spring-time bird sings like a bard.

Sleepest thou still? Shame! Wake up, friend,
The Sun of New Dawn lights thy home;
Let thy life and culture expand
From space to space with wings of time.

He brings together in a beautiful stanza the supreme literary achievements of Tamil in the course of 2000 years:

“Let us have Her bathed in the holy Kural, decked in Tiruvachakam, adorned by the triple Sangam lore; let Kamban’s gemmed art crown her. Let us mutter Tirumandiram, offer flowers chanting Arutpa of Ramalinga, sing Thevarams and the Alwar’s hymns; let us warble Arunagiri’s rapturous metres and dance in joy. Thus let us worship the Mother and be great by her blessings.”

The poet is so patriotic that he requests us to ‘Eat Her food, and wear Her clothes, learn Her lore

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and breathe Her air, to enrich Her arts and culture by assimilation, glorify Her before the world, increase Her wealth, Her trade and industries, and live for the Mother's prosperity".

The poet has a high ambition to make his mother-tongue loved and admired all over India:

"Come Aryan brother, let's cherish the immortal Tamil Culture and enjoy double harvest. Drink with me my nectar juice. Let's beautify earth with our combined art".

The poet in a heroic vein demands for a righteous Revolution:

Revolt, revolt against the wrong

Revolt in righteous rage!

Revolt against evils, headstrong,

To bring a nobler age!

Cut off the bonds of caste and creed

And slavish parasites!

Root out the tyrant's selfish greed,

And fight for human rights.

There is a charming garland of songs addressed to the Tamil nation where the poet glorifies the womanhood of the Tamilnad:

Shiva's eye-flame burnt the cunning Cupid;

Kannaki's chastity consumed a town.

Andal's love won Vishnu's love and grace.

Ouvvai's words were wisdom for all ages.

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The songs of Ammai made the Lord to dance.
A hero-mother vowed to cut her breast
That did suckle her only son if he
Showed his back to the raging battle-field.
The son fell fighting with wound on his breast.
And she rejoiced more than his day of birth—
Such is the glory of our womanhood.

He visualises the day when the Mother will take
the throne of arts:

I saw the Mother on a gemmèd throne;
Kings and poets crown this Queen of arts;
Nations drink her words like milk and honey,
Seekers invoke her sacred love and grace.
The delight of her blessed smile inspires
The hearts of saints, heroes and seer-poets.
With all the world let us sing "Hail Mother!"

I may quote here a few stanzas full of true patriotic
feeling which bases itself on Tamil culture and
civilisation irrespective of the religion, colour of skin
or of the variations of habits and customs that men
may profess.

Passing through the trials of long ages
This ancient Mother shines in modern times,
Like rubied gold with radiating smiles,
She shows a new pattern of perfect life
Free, pure, equal-visioned and full of bliss.

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She has the best in old and best in new,
She has a universal heart of love.
She has a message for humanity:—
That is to live in soul's equality,
A cultured life of conscious bliss and peace,
Dynamic work and consecrated love.

To establish a new order, new age, new life and new world is the passion of his national songs.

"Mother, thy voice is sweet like a spring bird's song. It inspires renascent arts in us. Mother of heroes, the world of progressive zest shall recognise thy merit one day. We shall be one heart and soul in thee. We shall not see a brother man suffer. Our hunger shall never be appeased until one of us is still hungry. Thy honour is our honour. From pin to plane we shall produce here and enrich thee. Grant us energy; we shall universalise thy word, thy life, thy heart and thy glory. Our heart throbs with love for thee; we have conquered fear and broken the chains of slavery to be thy free and willing instruments. Our life shall flourish with the flood of thy grace to yield life-divinising fruits for humanity, Mother!"

Thus he envisages a land of freedom, prosperity, purity, and spiritual equality.

X. HIS DEVOTION TO INDIA

EQUALLY fervent is his devotion to India and her freedom and universal self-expression. We have already dealt with his national songs; we shall review here his national fervour. Unity of consciousness, heroic sacrifice, self-help, national education, modernised industry and constructive work are his national programmes. He dedicates thrilling songs to stimulate action in the awakened nation. In a touching song he images the present situation of disunity:

The jasmine breeze caressed my lonely muse;
Moonlight caressed the lovely lily-smile!
The waves were dancing wild with mystic joy;
The evening splendour charmed my reverie.

A sudden weeping shook my profound heart.

A Goddess stood before me, clad in rags:

Devotee: O Beauty bathed by tears! Who art Thou?

What is the story of Thy wordless pain?

Mother: This land is mine; I am India, child!

I lost my throne betrayed by loveless sons!

I am a queen of wealth but clad in rags;

My fields are rich but I beg for my food.

Despite my light the land is thick with gloom,

My darling soul, this is my fatal doom.

HIS DEVOTION TO INDIA

- D: Mother, Mother how shall we serve Thee hence?
Show us the way to gain the glory lost
By wanton ignorance of thoughtless sons?
- M: Love and sacrifice and unity
Shall lead again my sons to liberty.
By that I shall regain my paradise
And lead the world from war to blessed peace.

In a thrilling song of national awakening he says;

The Sun of free-India has risen!
Darkness and fear have fled before the light.
Divine fragrance fills the air anew;
A Lotus flows with immortal honey.
A great soul lights the fire of sacrifice
Heroes of truth offer their libations!
Forty crores of fervent voices hail,
"We bow to Thee, Mother of universe!"

The poet is aflutter for freedom:

Lead us to liberty, full liberty!
Mother of nations! give us victory!
Our land is flowing with milk and honey
Why should famine take away so many?
Why should this land of Shivaji suffer
From slavish mentality and fear?
Are the scions of Buddha simple worms?
Is this the land extolled by Appar's hymns?
Are we to live like sheep in butcher's hand?
Shall our head to haughty insult bend?

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Shall others treat us like rubbish refuse?
Ours is Ind; we are its princes bold!
We shall be free and dominate the world!

In another fiery song he sings;

Who stands in the way of freedom
And our consecrated service;
We shall establish the kingdom
Of the Mother by sacrifice.
Incited by divine fervour
We hug the flames of heroism
Shall Death defy our aim? Never!
Not even fate can change our whim!
Can poverty ravage this land
Of golden plenty fed by streams?
Are we to stand with folded hands
Indulging in old fairy dreams,
When our industries are starved,
When our waters are daily ploughed
By quick exploiting foreign ships?
Are we to poison our own lips?
To live in slavery is death;
To die for liberty is life;
Freedom! Freedom! That is our breath!

The following lines from his famous flag-song are
note-worthy:

Behold the banner of India
Hoisted by hearts of holy love

HIS DEVOTION TO INDIA

From south and north of Vindia
It speaks of us to sky above!
Storms and quakes shall never shake—
This flag, we guard through life and death.
We hold this body for its sake,
To guard its honour on this earth.
Lovers of truth and peace and light
Lovers of universal weal,
Pure-hearted souls shall all unite
Under this flag empyreal.
We shall fight injustice and wrong
To restore good and guard the right.
“Give all and act!” is our song
As we adore this in the heart.

TRIBUTES TO THE GREAT

There are various individual poems in which the poet glorifies his chosen heroes and saints. Indeed he has paid his tribute to every prophet, seer, saint or hero of the world and he holds all in equal respect.

We need not say much about his deep reverence to Sri Aurobindo to whom he has dedicated a large number of works, prose and poetry. The Poet sings:

Let us adore this golden Flame
Enthroned on dynamic silence,
This blissful supramental Light
Whose very sight is soul's delight,
Whose presence is a thrilling Force

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Which transforms human existence
Into an art of Life Divine.

Saint Valluvar is extolled as the true and great law giver of humanity. Swamiji has written a very popular treatise on the Kural of Valluvar in which he sings:

It is the lamp that chases mental gloom;
It is like crops enriching fertile fields ;
It is the wealth of happy existence;
It is the right-hand guide of human sort.
It is the light of righteous path to God;—
Kural, the ideal scripture of all,
It is like eyes to human soul indeed.

He presents a composite picture of Tamil literary glories thus: “Kundala Keshi is her ear-jewel; Valayapati, bangles; Chintamani, pendant on her breast, Manimekhalai, golden belt around her slender waist; Shilappadikaram is her jingling anklets, Choodamani is her crown-gem,—the beautiful Tamil Queen holds Tirukkural as her majestic sceptre to rule the world. How apt is the description!

Kamban is his favourite poet. He has written brilliant criticisms and has dramatised the whole Kambaramayanam.

Beat ye the drums of victory!
Hoist ye banners of high renown

HIS DEVOTION TO INDIA

Celebrate ye his festival!
Kamban has built an Art-Palace
Where Beauty lives in ecstasy.
He crowned Tamil with star-gemmed words
Of purest rays and highest price.
Immortal muse of divine souls,
Long live Kamban the King of arts.

Mahatma Ramalingam is the poet's beloved saint. He has written, his biography in Tamil and English. He extols him thus:

Superconscient sage is he,
The seer-poet of soulful life
The prophet of Supreme Grace-Light.
Ramalinga's honeyed fountain
Of flowing inspired hymns of Truth
Delighted my body heart and soul
Making my life an art of conscious bliss.

Of Arumuga Navalar, the champion of Shaivism, Swamiji says:

Fear he spurned that Fire of Truth,
That great Hindu reformer bold,—
Wedded only to Shiva's will,
He rescued ancient works from the
Sweeping flood of oblivion.

Mahamahopadhyaya Swaminatha Ayyar is a great admirer of Swamiji's poems and prose. He called

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our poet "an immortal fountain of art." In one of the verses dedicated to that great scholar, Swamiji says:

King of scholars, how can I mouth
Thy literary charity,
Thy tireless search in mines of old,
Thy simple life and sweet nature,
Thy heart wedded to Shiva's love—
How can I word thy worth, good old man!

The National Poet Subrahmanya Bharati has inspired one of the most beautiful works of Swamiji. *KaviKuyil Bharatiar* is a standard work in the Tamil Literature. A verse in it says:

Like two gems on a straight golden creeper,
His eyes emitted patriotic fire.
His song-torrents gushed out of emotion
Dancing wild with a surging trumpet-voice.

V. V. S. Ayyar was the bosom friend of Swamiji. In his *Inmemoriam* the poet sings:

He had the body of an Arjuna,
The lion-like heart of Guru Govind Singh,
Kamban and Valluvar spoke in his mouth,
Ah when shall I see such a friend again!

Chidambaram Pillai is another patriotic friend of Swamiji. He sings in a song:

Chidambaram! his very name inspires,

HIS DEVOTION TO INDIA

Manliness and brings before my vision,
A lion-voiced captain who navigated
Swadeshi ship when none could dream of it.

On Rabindranath Tagore, the Yogi has written a very elaborate treatise. He saw Tagore at Madura and he has also read his poems in the original. He sings:

Hail Rabindra, universal Poet,
Thy voice is flute voice of the Inner One;
A free and unfettered ocean-like voice,
Thundering with a gift to break the bonds
And render life a music of the soul.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda were adored by Swamiji in his youthhood. He has sung their life which he has dramatised. The poet sings:

Hail Ramakrishna, Dawn of New India,
Thy gracious energy flared up and won
Immortal victory for Vedanta
Through the brilliant Vivekananda

Swamiji is an admirer of Dayananda Saraswati whose Satyarthha Prakash he has translated and whose biography he has written in detail.

The poet extols him as "the father of modern India and champion of the Vedic lore, strong and mighty Brahmacharin, a super-messenger of Truth-Light".

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He saw Lajpat Rai when he came to Madras and in a poem says: "The tall and brave Lalaji, lion of the Punjab whose very sight can make the timid bold".

Our Poet has a very high regard for Lokamanya Tilak whom he saw in 1915. "Brave Lokamanya, lion-hearted Mahratta, gem of patriots, neo-Sivaji, Indian Nationalism is thy pet daughter. O trumpet voice of liberty, Gita-intoxicated soul, thy very name makes us heroes!"

In his monumental work Ramana Vijayam, Swamiji adores Sri Ramana Maharshi and calls the sage "a nectar sea of Bliss, a dynamic lamp of steady peace whose flame is Absolute I."

To Mahatmaji, the apostle of Non-violence he has dedicated many verses and lyrics. He sings:

As long as Truth and Dharma lead mankind,
As long as saints and heroes are honoured
As long as India's soul has not been lost,
Thy name shall be the healing balm
Of freedom-loving hearts, Great Soul!

Of Jawaharlal whose English and socialism are much admired by Swamiji, he says "He is a pearl-born diamond, the heroic flame of freedom".

These are some of the heroes that have inspired his odes.

XI. A POET OF PROGRESS

YOGI Shuddhananda Bharati's songs of progress (Munnerra Padal) are sung by the masses and social reformers. They describe all the aspects of the new urge for unity, independence and social prosperity and enlightenment of New India. They are verily songs of New Era. Every line of them is a message of the poet to humanity. He expresses his ideal manhood in these glowing terms:

That man is man whose life is public good,
Who knows the self and sees the self in all,
Who boldly upholds righteousness and truth,
And pours his heart in love of sacrifice
At the root of humanity's welfare.
Even Indra's wealth does not turn his head.
Broad in views, high-minded, sweet in words,
Equal-visioned and true in thought and deeds,—
He is the superman whom I adore.

The Onward songs enforce the ideals of purity, liberty, equality and universality of the individual. Yet other poems denounce the curse of untouchability. Others plead for total prohibition, abolition of animal

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sacrifice, eating flesh, etc. I shall select lines here and there:

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice, O sacrifice

Like clouds that cherish verdant earth
Like songful streams that flow and feed,
Like smiling flowers that feast the bees,
Like lamp that burns to light a home,
Like trees that offer fruit to men,
Like Sun that saves the life of earth,
Like stars that guide the path at night,
Like a mother that loves the child,—
Do sacrifice for public good!

PASSION FOR THE NEW

Set ablaze the good that burns the bad;
Old rubbish shall be manure for the new;
To bring anew, a new collective life
Perfect in body, all perfect in soul—
This is the mission of life and work.
The effete old cannot suit the new;
Baby's garment cannot fit the giant.
How can an ant rule over elephant-hill?
Come titans of the golden age of truth;
Heroes of God, let's raise a super-race.

EQUALITY

Sun light, rain, wind and sea and earth,
Are equal friends of all beings.

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In all the bodies soul is one;
One God resides in all the souls.
All are equal walking temples;
Forms and names are like garments.
Live all as one communion
United in the pure spirit.
Then no master nor slave can be.
No caste can divide human race.
All can eat the fruit of work
And live in love and peace and joy.

HARIJAN SONG

The sky and earth are common gifts for all.
All have a right to walk with head erect;
We shall worship in temple of the Pure;
Who says no? Will God fly away? Where?
We seek the light and not the gloomy walls.
God we seek and not a sculptor's stone;
Truth we want and not the temple priest.
We want equality and not the caste.

TIME'S TYRANNY

Hard workers starve and idlers feast;
The rich man rolls in luxury
The poor become poorer still.
Vandals exploit good virtue;
Brothers deceive brothers at home.
Powers threaten with atom bombs;
Machine crushes and science kills;
When shall this horror end, O Lord?

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WORKERS

Homes we build, but live in streets!
Fields we till and lay gardens
Food we grow but starve and pine.
Cotton we give but are naked.
No more this want and slavery.
Worker builds the world we habit
The working hand must have the fruit.

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

The poet's political career was mostly spent in Rural uplift work. He had sung many songs for the villagers. He used to sing and dance with them and thus educate and reform them through aesthetic methods. He sings:

Village is the root of nation's life;
Feed the root and the tree will give you fruit.
Bring light and industry to cottages,
Teach modern ways of farming and weaving;
Make every home a sanatorium,
Root out taverns, brothels, and purify
The rural life; that shall uplift the land.

EDUCATION

Bharatiar aims at a synthesis of the Gurukula, and the modern laboratory method in education.

Brahmacharya culture alone
Can give us virile supermen!

A POET OF PROGRESS

His oft repeated call is to inaugurate a new era of freedom, unity, peace, modern culture, and ancient spirituality along with many-sided industrial developments. He advises Indians to promote spinning, weaving, farming, cottage industries and various other arts and crafts. He has composed fine action-songs to cheer up labourers. An old lady spins and sings:

How sweet is the AUM of Charka
Its symphony brings us solace.
This spindle saves my honour now;
Come, sisters and spin with me,
We have cotton, wheel and loom.
To wear imported cloth is shame!"

His poems of feminine uplift are of special charm and power. They are very popular among ladies. A few lines can be quoted here:

Honour womanhood! Cherish motherhood!
Woman is Divine Energy; adore!
She is the architect of human life;
She purifies, inspires and beautifies;
Her smile delights the home and the country;
Her tears cast a gloom on existence.
Cheer her up, Mother of great heroes!

The poet pleads for the removal of all social disabilities, child-marriage, forced widowhood, slavery, etc., and gives equal status to women. He recommends

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Tantric sadhana to family men and the energy-culture which he describes in his Yoga Siddhi.

The marching songs of the poet are a thrill of inspiration:

“Hold up thy head before the world
Hold up and proudly walk
Like a moving golden peak;
Push on! forward! O hero bold!

He calls men to be supermen, brave, honest, straight-forward, adventurous, enlightened, virile, active, efficient and mighty.

He pleads for total prohibition of liquor:

Tavern and brothel are brothers of hell;
Wine is satan's cup of tempting poison.
It swindles wealth and spoils all thy health.

He pleads also for non-injury and complete vegetarianism:

Mercy marks the man of noble parts;
The same life throbs in men and animals.
Kill not, brother, take not the sinful food!

His songs addressed to the poor are heart-melting:

“Freedom to the poor! O when? and how?
They work like beasts and live in dark hovels;

A POET OF PROGRESS

Rags and wretched gruel are their lot!
Martyrs of work and want and grief,
Rise up, demand! Be free! And above want!
You are the nerves of nations! Be conscious!

Our poet has written many poems full of righteous indignation against the callous and unjust rich and many other poems full of poignant pity for the poor-man. There are poems breathing a socialistic fervour. Spiritual socialism is the poet's ideal, he says in the yoga Siddhi: "The sweat of work produces golden fruit; workers are the nerves of humanity. They have the first claim upon the fruit of labour."

From king to Bhangi, all are labourers!
To work and live all have an equal right.
Down with tyranny! Glory to labour!

Thus Shuddhananda is a great poet of patriotism. His message is not only for the Tamilnadu, India and Asia, but for all the world. Humanity to him is visible divinity. Shuddhananda certainly has a sweet mellifluousness of style like his great predecessor C.S. Bharatiar. The elder poet has condensation and directness of utterance and his poetry flows like molten lava with almost unbearable heat and force. It shows great impatience with wrong, and greater sense of urgency of the victory of right over wrong. He was in the thick of the political fight. Shuddhananda is a lover of

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peace and solitude and constructive work and creative art, yoga and meditation. He was indeed in the political arena for ten years, but most of his labour was constructive and he now stands outside the heat and turmoil of politics, rapt in God-communion. Both are great poets of patriotism, and each has his own characteristic gifts, traits, vistas and aspirations. Shuddhananda's vision is not only a politically free India, but a Divine India which shall transform humanity and heavenise earth-life. He sings:

Onward, heroes from hope to hope,
To raise a Divine race!

XII. A POET OF BEAUTY AND LOVE

THE poet invites us to enjoy the beauty that is lavished on us everywhere and bathe in the divine flood of bliss that abounds everywhere around us. "Life is neither misery nor an empty dream, but a temple of delight; life is a stream of the soul's bliss", says the seer poet.

This world's a Vision of Delight
Brimming with boundless Nature's art.
'Life is Love!' a spring-bird sings;
A golden peacock dances there
Spreading wide its passion-wings.
Who calls this world a dream of woes?
Existence is a nectar stream
Whose fount is songful psychic love.
Come let us dance in ecstasy
Inspired by Nature's symphony.

Our poet is a great optimist and his lines chase off pessimism. In an imaginary conversation between Siddhartha and Yashodara he says:

The faded flowers and leaves, O Lord
Form soil for fresh flowers and leaves.

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Fallen fruits give seed for groves.
The setting sun rises with birds.
The bird of life comes, goes, and comes
With mystic dreams of love and life;
Life is a blissful dance—
A thrill of tuneful trance!

Bharatiar is also a Yogi and an ascetic. We do not find in his overflowing torrent of poesy mere erotic songs. But we find love lyrics in his Kirtans and Natananjali dance-songs. His love is not sexual; it is purely psychic, the love of the soul offered to the Beloved Divine. In his opera Mullai Manam, there is a commingling of love poetry and mysticism, romance and rapture of the love of man and woman. I shall deal with this work later on. The poet sings:

My heart is lost in love;
My love is lost in Thee;
For Thee alone I live
Beloved, embrace me.
Thou art the fadeless light
With which I see thee straight.

The only love that our poet knows is the delight of love that embraces the soul's Overlord in samadhi or trance.

XIII. A POET OF CHILDHOOD

YOGI Shuddhananda excels as a poet of childhood like Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore's *Shishu* (Crescent Moon) and Subrahmanya Bharatiar's only song *Papa Pattu* are among the classics of this species of poetry. In the same way Shuddhananda Bharatiar's *Kuzhandai Inbam* (The Bliss of Childhood) is a high watermark of achievement in that type of poetic composition. His poems in this line are in many metres and in diverse tunes. They have a radiant rapture of feeling and a scintillating sweetness of sentiment and a sublime simplicity of style:

My rapture overflows
 As I see these children—
 Sweet and tender lilies
 Ah, their embrace is heaven!
 I kiss their lovely palms;
 I feed them with sweet-meats.
 Their broken words are psalms;
 Their winning smiles are treats.
 I read my life's message
 In their clean simple heart.
 Children, I see a sage
 In you, a world of art.

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The poet becomes a child among playful children.

Play microcosms!
I forget age and times!
I become a baby
With you to be happy!
Hail God in innocence!
Hail rosy child-fragrance!

With the ardent love of a mother the poet fondles the child:

Run to me, my darling sweet!
Brighten my heart with thy smiles.
Come singing, O stream of joy,
Skipping like a tender calf!

He enjoys the beauty of innocence rapturously:

My darling God, I kiss thee,
O Dawn-hued delight of my soul!
Thy face beams like the rising sun,
Thy smiles are pearls strung in lightning.
Thy lips are rosy-soft, O Gem!
Thy eye's-like a bee in white flower.
Thy ringlets are like curled clouds.
O my rapture soars in unvisioned skies
As I see thy unknown beauties!

The poet's imaginary child sports humourously, pranks, prattles, fights, resists, shows all its trickeries,

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and yet defies elders in wisdom.

I want my friends to be brave
Like Arjuna; so I battle!
Like Shivaji I behave;
There's rhyme in my rattle!
I won't obey like cattle!
From grandmamma's pet corner
I drag friends to open air!
To the hungry I distribute
The miser's hidden sweetmeat!

This is child's explanation for all his uncontrolled pranks!

The poet's lullaby is a very touching song:

Sleep my darling,
Tender, sweetling!
My hope's heaven,
My song's refrain!
South wind rocks thy
Cradle sky-high,
My heart of love
Fondles thee, dove!
Sleep, my pretty
Sleep, my beauty!

XIV. A POET OF NATURE

A TRUE poet is sure to be a poet of Nature as well, because Beauty which is the food of his soul first beckons to him from the glorious orbs of the sky, and the glowing wonders of leaf and flower, and the sublimities of hill and dale and sea. This poet of Nature sings in these exquisite metres:

Rhythmic beauty rushes forth
In floods of nectar sweetness
From the harp of existence.
The lily tank moon-silvered,
The smile of sun-lit Lotus,
The crimson peace of new dawn,
The mellow flute of zephyr,
The bird-song-thrill of fruit-groves,
The poem of Love's dream,
All are sparks of one Beauty
Which is the soul of Nature.

The poet lives in the cosmic consciousness. He sees himself in all. See his touching sympathy for a morning rose:

Play with the gentle songful breeze
O dawn-fair daughter, Rose!

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Among thorns thou smilest ablaze;
Are these rough thorns thy corps?
My heart trembles when men pluck thee;
This hard-hearted world will
Not allow Beauty to breathe free,
O brief bright life of thrill!
My love to thee, delightful rose,
I am thy votary!
Shrink not, my dear! A gentle kiss;
I shall drink thy beauty!

The poet runs into Vedantic-rapture at the dance
of the moon-lit sea:

Clapping thy million jewelled hands
Dance in wild ecstacy!
Roar out ' Freedom! ', kicking off bonds,
O blissful, boundless Sea!
Kissing fair earth with kind embrace
Whisper thy love-stories.
Speak out to Life that comes and goes
Secrets of inner peace.
Rise up with stormy drums, O Sea,
To fight against fear!
Bring us the joy of liberty
O Giant Lion astir!
O King of pearls, corals and gems
Million-tongued messenger!
Roar out freedom in soul-rhythms
Driving out dark despair!

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The blue sea and the blue sky are the entrancing friends of our poet. Rain clouds inspire him. "I love to live under the open sky, bathe in sun and rain, and breathe the tender flower-kissing breeze" says he. The dance of lightning delights his soul. See how he addresses the lightning flash:

Why so quick, O Lightning Love,
Fiery charm from heart of clouds!
A dart from veil! A dance! A wink!
Is thy life a flash from the dark,
O thunder-throb of soul afire!
Stop, stop! Fulfil my desire!
O thou vanishest like life here!

He sees the dance of Beauty in a vast heaven-domed earth:

From starry sky like rubied gold
In cascades of gemmed lightnings
Beauty descended on green earth
And danced to the rhythm of life
That flows from heart to heart in love.

The poet dreams of a communion of souls universalised and brought together in the temple of art.

Let hearts expand embracing hearts;
Let union be established in arts,
With joined hands let's dance O friends,
In the golden temple of arts.

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He describes in detail his poetic dreams in a superb novel called "The Temple of Art".

There is a beautiful song inviting the southern breeze to sooth his weary heart:

O breath of the beatific sea,
O music breathing in my flute,
O cloud-inviting host of earth,
How sweet is thy prattle and play!
Can't I embrace the form behind
Thy formless flow of ceaseless life!

The poet addresses the moon with rapture:

O silver swan swimming gently
In star-blossomed heavenly lake,
O boat of peace crossing the blue,
With lily lips I drink thy smile!

He imagines the universal Mother in the mooned night:

The twilight passed like magic dream;
The universal Mother came,
Night-clad bedecked in crores of stars,
Bearing a golden cup from which
She poured out nectar, which I drank;
I knew at once myself and world.
No more fear of birth and death!

The golden cup is the crescent moon.

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This poet of Nature who reads the message of life in the silvered mountain stream and the perfumed morning breeze, gives us a brilliant picture of his ideal life:

In tune with Nature I would live
In charming home built in a grove;
My time shall flow in work and art;
I shall live by a handicraft.
My soul shall mingle with the song
Of crystal spring that flows along.
My flute shall cause the snake to dance,
My love shall bring a renaissance
In man and beast and plant and stone.
My muse shall sing in cuckoo's tone,
My joy shall dance in peacock there,
My lips shall smile in morning flower;
My Self in all, all in my Self
Shall throb as cosmic conscient life.
Even a foe is my play-mate;
I shall love all and never hate.
For all are children of the Grace
That raises on earth a new race.

The peculiar beauty of the Indian conception affirms that Nature (Prakriti) and the Soul (Purusha) are but manifestations of Divinity. The Bhagavad Gita refers in Chapter VII to them as the Lord's Apra Prakriti and Para Prakriti (the lower and the higher Nature of the Divine) and describes in

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Chapter XI how the infinitesimal portion of the Divine Being shines out as Vibhutis (glorious manifestations) in the universe. The basic concept has gone into the innermost fibre of the inner being of all poets and artists in India, and our Yogi is no exception to the rule. He is Nature-mad. He worships the light of God in the charming beauty of Nature. He sings:

The winning smile of virgin Dawn
The splendid sight of blooming woods,
The garden Koil's freedom-song,
The radiant Sun, the eye of skies,
The jasmin-breeze of peaceful eve,
The moon that swims through starry blue,
The thunder-drums and lightning dance,
The message writ by rolling waves—
From all these features bright and true
A beauty flows with milk of grace,
I drink like calf and sing like bird!
The song springs up and then the word.

The poet lives, moves and has his being in the loveliness and vastness of Nature. Sings our poet:

The blue sky is my grandfather,
Air, my grandma spinning yarns.
The earth is my dear Mother,
The Sun my luminous Father.
The moon is my lovely uncle.
The ocean is my dancing aunt.

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The play of lives is my drama.
Friends and foes are equal players.
The cat is my gentle sister,
The tiger is my rude brother.
All the world is my kith and kin.
Time is my rapid chariot.....

Another fine trait of the Yogi's nature-poetry is the delightful manner in which he traces the beauty of Nature and beauty of art to the same source. In fact it is Nature which inspires Art, and without the basic love of Nature there could be no Art at all. Yet it is usual to regard them as separate and even contrasted entities. Our Bharatiar says that he will pluck the fragrant flower of poetry from the grand beauty of a blooming woodland, and distil melody from the silver cascade.

"My muse follows the course of seasons; from the dark shades of silent night and the bright processions of the active day, I learn the play of two forces on earth; but I learn also to be a wide witness like the eternal sky", says the poet.

He flies and sings with birds and runs with streams and meditates with the fixed hills. The poet despises a caged, tied, slavish life however rich it may be. One of his beautiful imaginative story-poems is "The Koil and the Caged bird". The parrot of the golden cage with golden chains takes pride in her golden life and fat feasts, under the shade of a golden

A POET OF NATURE

lord! The free Koil retorts:

My sister of the golden cage,
Is He a fool that gave us wings
To fly singing in freedom's sky?
It's desert-life that shuns Nature
Rich is light and air and warmth,—
A cooling sight of golden green.
Deluded slave, can you enjoy
The sun and moon and breeze like me?
Do you possess that joy of love
That unites hearts and expands life?
The universe throbs in my breast;
Nature's heart sings in my free voice.
Fie upon you, fettered sister!
Break this cage and be limitless!

A poem entitled *Natanam* is very beautiful and shows Nature's rhythmic dance of loveliness in a charming manner:

The blue Goddess dances in waves,
The torrent dances down the hills,
The peacock of my poet-soul
Dances to tunes of birds and bees,
Blossoms dance kissing the breeze;
Love dances with love in moonlight;
Devotees dance in ecstasy
I dance hand in hand with God-Force
In all that dance in music-space!

XV. A POET OF DIVINE ECSTASY

YOGI Shuddhananda's spiritual hymns and songs and poems cover a very wide field showing both his knowledge of the essence of Hinduism and his realisation of the harmony of all religions. His spiritual and mystical poetry reach lofty and rarefied heights of experience and expression. He expresses with deep conviction his realisation of the spiritual unity of things: the Sadhana Kadam of his *magnum opus*, Bharata Shakti, is a synthesis of all systems of religion, philosophy, yoga and sacred scriptures. In it he has elaborately sung the life and teachings of all the prophets and Rishis of East and West and has worked out a new Unitarianism in which all can collectively live and progress. He sings:

The rain and river have one source;
 And all rivers run to That
 The source and mouth of beings here
 Is One Bliss-conscious Purity.
 The rainbow colours radiate
 From one white intense effulgence.
 One conscient cosmic energy
 Expands as Sky and holds the stars.

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One earth supports all gardens.
One Truth maintains all the faiths
One spirit throbs in all bodies.
Know that Pure One—Absolute Bliss!

His spiritual poetry has the exaltation of feeling, passionate fervour, and exquisite felicity of expression of Mahatma Ramalingam, Maharshi Tayumanar and Saint Manicavachakar. While the poems of Tayumanavar have some high qualities, their style is somewhat over-Sanskritised and heavy-footed. Shuddhanand's spiritual poems have a wonderful light-footed grace, soaring to a cosmic consciousness, a poignancy of feeling, inspired by seer-vision and simplicity of style. In all these respects they are even superior to Subrahmanya Bharatiar's hymns, which themselves reach a high-watermark of poignant and passionate expression. His hymns to the three-fold Shakti have a great weight of basic philosophic ideas. But Shuddhananda's hymns have a higher fineness, intuition, and power, and often reach the heights of expression attained in the period of Alvars and Nayanmars, when Tamil Spiritual poetry outsoared the spiritual poetry of the rest of the world. I shall quote a few lines here:

Hail immortal Bliss of Purity,
Supreme Fruit of immutable Delight,
Hail splendid Light that attracts my soul,
Hail Grace that gives itself to self-givers!

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Hail Lord of Cosmic dance in every heart,
The unique One that has become the All,
The One essence of life and elements,
The Supreme King of all the universe,
The Conscious Truth that thinks in brain and acts,
That feels in hearts, and sees as Seer from eyes,
That tastes in tongue, listens sound in ears.
That is the man, woman, and love that unites both.
Hail Energy that plays as universe!
The nameless formless One in names and forms!
Hail Life that is the breath of all that live,
The Pure Spirit, the soul of all beings!
The One in everyone which knows no caste,
No mental creed, no colour, clime nor race;
Father, Mother, Elder, Younger and God,
The Power that holds the multi-forms in Self,
Let us never forget Thy Light and lead,
Thy impersonal help to devotees,
Thy mystic presence everywhere, in all,
Let us see thy temple in this world,
And thy unique image in all that live.
By serving all we shall adore Thy Self,
By loving all we love Thee unique Love;
All beings are one family of thy Grace;
Thyself we see in us and in the world.
No fear, no woe, no bonds! We are the free
Happy children of immortality.

The poet's heart knows no caste or religion. It identifies itself with all things in the cosmic consciousness

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and sees all from the lofty plane of Truth-Light and declares: "That which is, is ONE; I, you, he, she, it, they—all are That One. He or she whom I see, is my self. My breath runs through all lungs, my thoughts through all brains, my love throbs in all hearts, and all hearts beat in me."

The poet sends fervent prayers to the Universal Divine to give him the Shakti to unite humanity in divinity and to transform the universe into one vast Social Communion.

Let my life be a hill-fountain
 Flowing down to feed all the world,
 With unique self-consciousness-Bliss.
 Let thy spark of divinity
 Flame up in calm meditation
 Like power from plus and minus wires
 Like tree from seed and sun from dawn.
 I throw my burden at Thy feet
 And travel in Thy train of Grace;
 Lead me on, O Will supreme!
 Thou art my path, my goal and friend.
 Let my life bloom in Thy Truth-Light
 And spread the fragrance of Thy Grace.
 Without Thy grace I shall be like
 A lordless bride, a motherless child,
 A flameless lamp and heartless love.
 My pilgrim soul seeks Thy Sanctum
 Crossing the flesh, hushing the mind.
 Felling desire, fighting ego,

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Traversing hills and dales of modes.
Climbing the heights of conscious planes,
I have to find my home in Thee
Lead me, Heroic Master, hail!

Here are a few exquisite lines animated with his
divine fervour:

Thy breath is an infinite flow
Of music in this simple flute.
The fragrance of thy music fills
My universal self in all.
Each blossom of the singing heart
Becomes a crowning gem of love
As it touches Thy feet, O King!
Each word sparked out of silent trance
Becomes a blaze of beatitude
Blessed by Thy will, O Delight-thrill!
My hands are free from former chains;
I weave garlands and wait for Thee.
The gentle breeze brings Thy message;
Thy boatman calls me; fast I go.
I see thy golden boat afloat
Upon a cosmic flood, O Lord!
But where art Thou O Beloved?
With eyes and mind I seek in vain.
The clamorous day fades into night;
From twinkling stars Thou seest me!
My aspiration goes to Thee.
In midnight hush Thou interest

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My open heart and whisperest:
"Behold Thou art the I, I am.
We sail as two but live as One
In this boat of Eternal Light!"

"The thief of hearts is hiding in my heart" says he in a song, "He comes unknown, moves unknown to eyes and leaves the house to unknown destinies!"

The yogi lays stress on faith, contemplation and meditation, as the potent forces leading us to enjoy the bliss of the mystical consciousness. Mere study and logic-chopping cannot lead us in that direction. The heart is more important than the head, if we desire to attain the divine gift of grace.

The bud is waiting for the Light;
Word and nerve are of no avail;
It opens at the silent touch
Of Thy peaceful rays in colourful joy!
Beauty reveals itself and smiles
While Calm embraces blooming soul.

"If you want discussion go to logicians; if you want Truth dive into silence. If you want bliss seek within; if you want confusion seek Pandits. That which is the Bliss in heart and Knowledge in brain, that which is Energy in the vital, and Light in the soul, is the Pure Spirit, the Divine in you; know That, be That; see That in all."

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Bharatiar has written many beautiful poems and songs in adoration of the divinities worshipped in India. They are very popular everywhere; they are sung daily on radios and in concerts. But in all the various divine conceptions he realises the unique One several forms and attributes: The Poet sang these songs during the course of his meditation upon the Divine in several of His self-manifesting aspects of Grace-Light. They are all mellifluous and set to music. A long garland of songs is dedicated to Shiva, the Flame-Light of Divine Bliss, Nataraja the estatic cosmic Dancer in the universal Wisdom-hall. Another beautiful garland is dedicated to Vishnu, the omnipresent Lord who preserves beings, to Rama the Divine hero, to Krishna the Teacher of the Holy Gita. A spirited set of songs is devoted to the Supreme force of the Divine, worshipped as Parashakti, to Maheshwari the Power of Knowledge and Peace, to Kali the terrible force which destroys the evil, and paves the way for good, to Mahalakshmi the charming force that enriches the life of humanity and sweetens the collective existence, to Saraswati the pure force of consummate skill, and perfect workmanship and Ananda Shakti the Power of Bliss which raises the soul to the height of supreme beatitude. His songs on Murugan, the flaming heroic force of Shiva, are full of valiant fervour. It is rather difficult to translate these highly spiritual intuitions. I shall

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give here a few stray lines:

Who dares deny my Father?
Behold, he dances in the heart—
The Lord of Light and Grace and smiles
Who grants the prayer of seekers,
The King of all the worlds adored
By heroes of freedom and sages of wisdom
Who denies Him? Behold Him in the heart!

* * *

I sing Thy grace like bird and brook, O Lord,
Not for the fame that men can give,
But for communing with Thy Light.
Do I sing? No; Thou inspirest
Songs in me from sky and earth.
I do not care what others say;
I place my flowers at Thy feet,
Let Thy will be done, O Lord!

* * *

I have strung this wreath of Love
Not for name or fame or gold.
Cast a look at this offering
Wouldst Thou not, O Lord?

* * *

I pine for Thee, my life's beloved Lord!
When wouldst Thou come? O Grace Divine!
When wind's astir I hear Thy feet.
In rising sun I see Thy eye.
Thou knowest me yet hidest Thee;

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Forlorn me! I've no messenger!
My virgin love I can't tell out!
I wait for Thee! Come, Beloved!

Let my life be an aesthetic Dance
With Thy ecstasy, O Blissful!

His Will is done, O Mind, forbear! .
Resign all thy cares to That!
The good may come and bad follow;
Men may hate and despise thee;
Home and friends may spurn thee off!
Cunning rogues may conspire against
Thy life and blackout thy fair name.
But do not pine and weep, O Self!
There is the Father, gracious Lord,
Omnipresent, and omnipotent.
Believe He shall not forsake thee.

* * *

Come and do sadhan, brother!
Off with castes and mental creeds;
The Truth is one and path is there.
Even forest monkeys live on fruits;
Cranes remain closing their eyes.
White bears bury themselves in snow.
The famished fast; no use of these—
Such things cannot bring you Grace.
No use of rambling in woodlands
And living in solitary caves.
Control the mind and vital waves.

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Steep thyself in meditation
Upon the One who is thy heart.
Do sadhana and realise THAT

* * *

Fear not even Death, O mind!
There is the Lord who kicked off Death!
Body is thy karmic cloak:
The mind's a sea of tossing waves
Fortune is a changing fit.
Proud crowns one day roll to dust.
Fix thy faith in God alone.
Fear not even demon-bombs!
The lasting One is one with Thee!"

* * *

Tell me Koil will he come today?
"Where art Thou" I cried one day
"Here" he said and touched my heart.
The Dawn-bright Lord, the Sun of life,
Will he come to sooth my heart again!

* * *

Grant me that life Divine uniting here
Heaven and earth in equal self-delight.
Wake in me O Blissful energy,
Kindling the dawn of serene peace in heart.
The heaven's face is crimson gold with smile.
Lilies sleep and lotus keeps awake.
The rising Sun brings hope to pilgrim souls.
Wake up the new era life in me, Bliss!"

* * *

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No more fear, friends! The boatman of our life
Will row us safe through storm and stress ashore.

* * *

Strike the note of eternal bliss
In this happy Guitar of life.
Like moon-lit waves and new-dawn birds
Let my soul sing in joy of Thee

* * *

A Delight floods forth in wild ecstasy
From loving heart to feed the Spring of life;
New Beauty is afire in all faces.
A passion bursts out of the blooming woods

* * *

Who has bent the sky like that?
Who paints it with rain-bearing clouds?
Who has set there the diamond-stars
And who beckons from twinkling eyes?
Who traverses the space daily
In wind-horsed chariot sun-moon-wheeled.
Who grows as crops on earthly breast.
Who streams down singing from hill tops?
Whose beauty smiles in feminine face?
Who sculptures earth-life out of Love.
Who fashions forms from elements?
It is He that throbs in hearts!

* * *

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Reside in my heart O Mother
Fair like the dawn, and silver white,
O winning smile of freedom's joy,
Sun-moon-eyed, lotus-footed,
Playing the harp of existence
With lily-tender hands, O Light,
Breathe in my soul a life of songs.

* * *

Make me a hero of new conquests,
A brave hero of soul's empire,
Bring victory to my efforts
O Goddess Kali, Freedom's Fire!

Bharatiar has actually lived all the important religions of the world, and he gives us the life of all prophets, also the essence of the great scriptures of Hinduism, Bhuddhism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, etc. In his Samaya Saram, we find the essence of the Gita, the Vedas, the Isha, Kena, Katha Upanishads, and the essence of all the world's religions in simple Tamil verses. In the Sadhana Khandam of the Bharata Shakti the Poet sings the life and teachings of the world's Prophets from the Vedic Seers and Valluvar to the present-day Yogins and Sages. He works out a synthesis of all the Religions, philosophies, yogas and revelations, and reveals a Shuddha Sanmarga (the Pure Spiritual Path) which all humanity can follow in harmony:

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While entering into the essence of every civilised world-religion, Bharatiar affirms again and again that whatever be the form, the technique, the ritual, the ethics, the creed, or the mythology of every religion, God's Grace is poured out beyond measure, in response to the human heart's deep and true call of devotion. His poems are filled with the true Gita-Spirit and Upanishadic fervour of Godliness and synthesis. In a poem in Inba Mala (Garland of Bliss), Bharatiar lists off the essence of all faiths:

"That one who has cut the bonds of desire is a *Buddhist*. The master of the senses is a *Jain*, the loving forbearer is *Christian*; the brother strong in faith of God is a *Musalman*; the pure Light-worshipper is a *Zorastrian*; the *Brahmin* is he who is all-love and equal-visioned; the liberated *Vedantic* seer is he who sees the self in the universe and the universe of beings in the self. The *Shaivite* is he who sees embodied beings as a moving temple and serves the Blissful Lord in all. The *Vaishnavite* is that devotee who sees the omnipresence of the Divine; the *Shakta* is he who sees the play of one universal Energy in all beings. The *Atheist* is he who attributes existence to Nature. All these are dear to me. All I love and regard. I take the essence from all. O Peoples, think of the original Truth that was before all these man-made creeds and their prophets came into existence. Think of the universal ONE, the Witnessing supporter of

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the world-play, the eternal Truth Light from which all these religions sparked out. Meditate upon that Truth Light which is aflame in your heart; see that in all, and work devotedly for the peace, bliss, and harmony of the universal, collective existence of man."

The yogi teaches thus his Shuddha Sanmargam, the basic religion of the human race:

Ye who habit this temple world, listen!
 The Pure Supreme is God, the Truth-Light-Bliss,
 The Knowledge-Energy that plays as Life.
 Like caged-bird one Spirit lives in all.
 That is the I, the He, She, It, and they.
 Know this and be equal-minded to all.
 Live in the world like mountain streams
 That feed the earth, wending towards the sea.
 Live like a flower, give like a golden fruit.
 Do not be bound to good and bad and death;
 Fear not, pine not; be joyful in the self.
 As long as you are, live like morning flower.
 Be wide like sky and free like wind and sun.
 Selfish egoism, impure desire, envy,
 Deluded ignorance torture this life.
 Leave off the selfish pride of I and mine;
 Live each for all and all for each in God;
 Universe is a common home for all;
 "Work and eat the fruit" is law of life.
 Give and enjoy is law of unity.
 Conscious Truth, and gracious love and faith,

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Knowledge-culture and service brighten life.
Behold the birds and bees and ants and live
Like them as one Social communion.

The poet extols the Vedic Rishis as "Lights of Earth", the Tamil sages as "the Seers and Pioneers of Spiritual Communion", he speaks of Buddha as the "Flame of Compassion", of Mahavira as "the Prophet of Non-violence", Appar as "the Hero of Soul force", Tayumanar as "the fountain of true wisdom", Ramalinga as "The Mahatma who revealed the way of collective Spiritual life in the Divine Communion". He regards Jesus as "a symbol of patient sacrifice," Muhammad as "the Prophet of fiery faith in the Supreme", Shankara as the "Purest soul of heavenwide Self-Knowledge", Nanak as the "Rose of holy fragrance", Nammalvar as the "Yogin of Divine Rapture....."

We should also remember that the Yogin Bharatiar sings with the same passionate fervour in Upanishdic accents about the Blissful Absolute beyond names and forms (Nirguna Brahman).

"Let us meditate" sings he, "upon the Purest One, the supreme Sachchidananda Brahman in the heart and be conscious of That in the tranquil dynamism of self-identity. That is beyond caste and creed. To talk of my god, my religion, my sect, my dogma is nonsense. Who can say the Sun belongs to him alone, and who

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can monopolise sky and air? Brahman the Pure, is equal to all, and all have a right to attain That. It is the Yogic lamp of splendour, alive in every psychic heart. Shiva, Hara, Vishnu, Narayan, Allah, Father, Shakti, Guhan, all are That alone called severally and conceived severally. If the mind gathers into the silence of the Heart's core, you can be conscious of That which is the all. You can then enjoy the immortal stream of nectar bliss in the self."

In a beautiful passage in his "Towards Godhood" the poet exclaims:

"One Life breathes in all the lives; one Lover animates all hearts. Blessed are they that know Him; for they shall know the Truth of Self and world. Blessed are they that surrender ego, for theirs is the freedom of Love Divine! Blessed are the faithful, for they are the strongest instruments of the Divine. Blessed are the pure in love, for theirs is the closest embrace of the soul's Beloved! Blessed are the sincere for theirs is the Divine favour! Blessed are the truthful, for theirs is the Kingdom of God! Blessed are they that live for the Divine, for the Divine shall be their life and living! Blessed are the conscient workers, for theirs is the flood of the Divine Force. Blessed are they that seek the Divine, for the Divine shall seek them! Blessed are they that walk towards the Divine, for the Divine shall walk towards them! Blessed are they that give themselves to the

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Divine, for the Divine shall give himself to them!
Blessed are they that know the Divine, for they shall
be divine. Blessed are they that live in tune with
the Divine consciousness, for theirs is Life
Divine!"

XVI. YOGA SIDDHI

THE crowning consummation of Shuddhananda's spiritual socialism is in the mystic couplets of his "YOGA SIDDHI" or the Gospel of Perfect Life in tune with the Divine. It is in Kural Venba metre. It is well-known that the immortal Tirukural of St. Valluvar deals with the three out of the four aims of life. The three are Righteous Duty (Dharma), Wealth (Artha) and Connubial happiness (Kama). The fourth, Spiritual Beautitude (Moksha), is left out, though briefly indicated, and summed up in the opening poem. Yogi Shuddhananda has taken up this task and done it in a wonderful way. His Kural Venba metre has that combination of memorable brevity, beauty, and melody which has made Tirukural, the supreme poem of the Tamil genius, and one of the world-books for all time. Yogi Bharatiar has added to it a luminous commentary. The Yoga Siddhi has been translated by the author himself, fortunately, into English. "It is a new gospel of Perfect Life in the pure Divine consciousness. It is an immortal garland of Wisdom-blossoms obtained at the height of inner Divine communion." Every

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couplet is a sparkling jewel of Truth, brightened and beautified by word and rhythm and well tested by practical experience". I shall quote a few memorable lines here and these are from the Author's English Yoga Siddhi, The Gospel of Perfect Life:

Within the heart, as Knowledge-Self He is
Whose holy Grace ordains abundant bliss.
Whose temple is the boundless universe,
His moving temple every being is.
Speak out and pray with tender heart and true;
Steeped in love; the Lord will answer you.
Why quarrel over 'is or not', O man?
Live and serve the world as best as you can.
Of what avail is human birth if it
Knows not the native Godhood and is that.
Someone within points out, 'this is the path',
Follow that path, fearlessly, in faith.
Be bold and do the righteous deed you feel;
The Grace of God will stand a sentinel.
Harp not upon thy ancient glories, man;
New progress make to suit the time's élan.
In life that blossoms from the inner Light,
There is no caste and no communal fight.
Serve ye the world with love for better ends;
The more you serve, the more the soul expands.
Not by his wealth, nor form nor lore, nor fame;
Know man by love which is his sublime name.
The man is light and woman energy:
They are like gold and art in jewellery.

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Love is the chaste energy of the heart
That fosters home and world and life of art.
The God in man is always pure and calm
The vital demon raises bloody storm.
This world shall be a sinless paradise,
If men above hunger and thirst arise.
That social union is good for all
Which is for all, by all a people's rule.
Yoga is at-one-ment with the One
That comes when the wandering mind is won.
You are the swan of mystic white lotus
Which blossoms in the Golden spring of His.
As days go on, deluded days go off;
You feel the truth in God and keep aloof.
Hail heavenised earth and divinised life!
Let truth and bliss live like husband and wife.
Live all under the canopy of God,
Brimful of bliss and light spreading abroad.

XVII. BHARATIAR'S DRAMAS

SHUDDHANANDA Bharatiar has written also various dramas in prose and verse—thirty prose and five verse dramas. The Old and the New, Vasanta Sundari, Anbin Arbhutam, Jayamani, Rani Mangammal, Mira Bai, Pratap singh, etc. are famous prose dramas and they too contain many fine songs. Among the five poetic Dramas Kala Ter (The Car of Times) has been published and it is also enacted. Mullai Manam (The Marriage of Mullai) is a melodrama in one act. The poet has also dramatised the whole of Kamba Ramayanam, and three plays covering up to the end of Sundara Kadam have come out. Rama's Messenger, Rama's Renunciation and the Illusive Deer are very popular. Mohini, Shivastram, Subhadra Kalyanam and other Puranic plays are full of songs and poems intermingled with prose.

Kala Ther is a social drama, a new venture in a new style, which Bharatiar calls *Kavya Natakam* (poetic Drama). In English literature it was found that social dramas could not be written in a poetic style like the Shakespearean drama. Hence in modern times Bernard Shaw has rightly taken to brilliant

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prose as the vehicle of the social drama. Bharatiar's genius like that of Tagore is lyrical and spiritual, and hence he has ventured to use the poetic medium for this special drama. Action in the play keeps proper tempo.

The story of Kala Ter is as follows: Sivan is a prosperous Vakil at Madura. Mangalam is his dear daughter by his deceased first wife, and is of good disposition. His second wife Sundari is of a cruel nature. Muruganar is Sivan's friend. His son is Jyoti and his daughter Valli. Mangalam loves Jyoti. Valli is a young widow and is in love with a young man named Kannan. Sundari contracts an illicit passion for her aunt's son Ponnu, who is a libertine. Annavi is his evil-minded friend. Annavi brings about the friendliness of Ponnu and a courtesan named Mullai. Sundari wants to drug and kill her husband, and get Mangalam married to Ponnu while carrying on her amorous intrigue with Ponnu, and eventually kill Mangalam. She drives away Sivan's mother Vedanta Patti, and drugs Sivan who becomes a lunatic.

Then Sundari has the news published in the papers that Mangalam is married to Ponnu. Jyoti who is the real beloved of Mangalam, is in despair and finds solace in patriotic service and yoga. He gives his sister in marriage to Kannan.

Sivan's clerk Seenu and the cook Appu help Sivan

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and get a document signed by him to the effect that his properties should go to her. Ponnu wants to kill Mangalam with the aid of four conspirators. Mangalam wants to commit suicide as she learns that Jyoti has gone away in despair after the advertised marriage of Ponnu. Kannan and Valli ask her to live with them. At that time Ponnu and his gang turn up to carry away and kill Mangalam so that he may marry Mullai and deceive Sundari. A fight ensues. Ponnu's shot hits Annavi instead of Kannan, Annavi dies. The desperate Mangalam falls into the Vaigai river but is rescued. The Police arrest Ponnu, Mullai and Sundari.

Meantime, the world War II breaks out. Abdulla Khan wins distinction, and is sent to India to train the Indian army. At that time Rev. Miller is the Principal of the American College at Madura. Mangalam who is rescued by College scouts is successfully treated by Miller. He and his wife bring her up as their daughter. Abdulla sees Miller and finds her out.

Meanwhile Jyoti has established a Yoga Nilayam at Jnanapuri, after becoming the disciple of a Zemin-dar who is a very pious personage and trains him in Yoga and goes away to Kailash. The institution is a combined orphanage, school, hospital and Yoga institute. Jyoti learns from his friend Abdulla about Mangalam and writes to Miller to send her to help

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him to run his institution.

Meantime, Sundari having been cruelly treated by Ponnu and Mullai, mixes poison with the wine meant for Mullai. Sundari goes in search of her husband to fall at his feet and seek his pardon. Ponnu drinks the wine and feels that he is dying. He accuses Mullai of poisoning him, and stabs her to death.

Abdulla then learns that Vedanta Patti, Sivan and Murugan are doing Yoga at Kalahasti. The Guru Yogi also comes there; they all then go to Jnanapuri. Mangalam, Mr. Miller, Abdulla and friends also meet there. Thereafter Mangalam and Jyoti, blessed by the Guru, live a life of Yoga and service to the world in Jnana Puri. Sundari is convicted and sentenced to transportation for life. The scenes are well set up and, as may be expected, there are magnificent outbursts of poetry. A few lines can be given for example:

[The profligate Sundari presses her bedridden husband to hasten the marriage of Mangalam to Ponnu. The wise Mother of Sivan intervenes]

Sundari : Shut up old hag! No more philosophy!
 My way is way! My will is law here!
 Old Mother : What thundering arrogant insolence!
 This youthful vanity and blind passion
 Have degraded womanly modesty!
 Age and folly lead thee to filthy vice.

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- Sundari : Out loathsome hag! To talk before me thus--
Me, a modern fashioned lady rich and fair?
Thy age is gone to grave; so thy morals!
My voice is master voice in this, my home!
- Old Mother : What raging storm of words before thy sire!
The home is his and wife is his servant!
- Sundari: Equals in life are sire and wife; know that.
These are the days of woman's liberty.
Man must frame his manners to her will.
To make and mar my husband I have right
I, a fairy of the civilised world!
- Old Mother: Woe unto thy civilisation which
Overthrows and wounds and kills the sire!
Fate will blot thy painted beauty-pride!
Thy lord, thy king, thy keeper, thy husband—
He toils for thee and expects love from thee--
Thee who sit at home, coquet and conspire!
- Sundari: Scornful hag, I have right to do
All that modern passions prompt me to do.
Out effete wiseacre!
- Old Mother: Gladly, at once!
My son, let God save thee from this devil!
- Sivan: Ah my mother, wisdom departs with thee!
Ah something makes me giddy! O my God!
My heart is soft to her and hard to thee!
Mother have this money to maintain thee!
- Old Mother: Almighty God that feeds the birds and beasts
Shall maintain soul in this shrinking frame!
I wish thy good; she wants money; give her.
Sundari have it for thy fashion-raid on life!

BHARATIAR'S DRAMAS

Sundari: Gladly; give it! But be my slave or out!
Old Mother: Slave of vanity, the day shall come
Which shall tame thy impertinent tongue!
You sow evil; you will reap it; be sure.
Sivan, my son, I shall find a doctor
To counteract the poison...

Sivan: Ah mother!

Sundari: Get out enemy, out...and howl with dogs...
(necks out)

(Enter Mangalam)

Mangalam: Atrocity! What hell of perfidy!
Stay Gran'ma stay, O wisdom's light!

Old Mother: Wisdom's light shall calmly wait elsewhere!
Live darling! I go! I go, my son!

Mangalam: Why hast thou become taciturn, father!

Sivan: Some evil force is pressing me, darling!
As Joyti's half when shall I see thee, maid!

Sundari: How this name pricks my heart! Enough
of it!

Mangalam: Do not thy sins prick thy soul, O Pride!
Grandma, I too come! I can't live in hell!

(Follows; Sundari drags her)

Sundari: Get in imp! Thy sire is there—Ponnu!
Respect him! and learn manners from me!

Mangalam: Respect thy sire and learn womanliness!
Ponnu is thy keeper, not my sire!
I shall not sell my heart to vicious gold.
Light I seek and not this darkened hell.
(Ponnu pounces like a tiger from the next
room)

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Ponnu: To call me hell! I'll clip thy tongue,
strumpet!

Mangalam: Father, father save me from this tiger!

Sivan: Ah fate! (weeps) Ah burden of this existence!

Sundari: He is husband, worship him, wretched girl!

Him marry; or die a lonely wench!

Mangalam: I say again, O libertine, hear:

You speak of freedom for thy evil plots:
I demand freedom for my good intent.
Light I love and Light I wed and live.
I hate this powdered sham and shun his face.

Against social tyranny, I rebel!

My birthright is to fight for what is right.

Marriage is a choice and not a force.

I shall wed that Light alone or live

Alone to serve the nation's womanhood...

* * *

We shall read a few significant lines in the last scene in which Joyti and Mangalam meet:

Jyoti: Met we have at last by Divine Grace

To live in love of Him in us, and all.

Mangalam: Through ups and downs of life in car of times

We traversed lonely ways and forests now

Jyoti: We ride in joy towards a divine goal.

Karma pulled the car with violent jerk

BHARATIAR'S DRAMAS

And dragged it on through rugged destinies-
A mystic Light led us at last...

Mangalam: To Light.

The light of life and delight of my soul!
We have united, Lord, like rays and Sun.

Jyoti: We have united not only soul to soul,
But with the universal Souls to day.

The seed of love which took root in our
heart

Has putforth flowers and fruits and scatters
seeds

In all receptive universal hearts.

We love today to love and live for all.

MULLAI MANAM

Bharatiar's genius is at home in lyrical operas like Mullai manam (Mullai's Wedlock). Mullai is a heroic Marava beauty. Prince Marudu falls in love with her and she returns his love:

I loved thee at the first sight, O Beauty!
Thou art my life; thy smile is jasmine-like;
Thy look like sword and spear pierces me.
I am vanquished by thy charms, maiden!

They meet and embrace and Marudu departs.
Mullai is in despair:

I could not eat and could not sleep, O friend!
Hill, stream and woodland do not comfort me.

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The gentle strains of Vina disgust me.
And flute is no more sweet to my ears.
The jeering smile of jasmine pricks my mind.
The breeze of lily tank scorches my frame.

The mother finds out the cause of Mullai's pining.
Marudu returns and takes Mullai in a palanquin.
The poet tells us that there is a limit to the sky but
there is no limit to love in true united hearts. We
can meet Godhead only in Love.

Limit there is to sea but not to my love.
To body there is measure; but not to my heart.
The sky has bounds; but not united bliss.
There is a splendid light in lovers' heart
Which chases night and brightens life with joy.

The poet then blends love and art:

Let us be passion-mad with art
Of life in love. Life is delight.
There is koil song and peacock dance.
The moonlight mingles in play with waves.
Let's live in Nature's art and defy Death.
Living in beauty like bees in flowers,
Even the unseen God we catch in Love!

The poet is a good actor and he writes his plays
and acts them himself for himself and then releases
them. His plays are often broadcast by the All India
Radio.

XVIII. BHARATA SHAKTI

YOGI Shuddhananda Bharatiar's *magnum opus* is BHARATA SHAKTI MAHAKAVYA, a great epic of Supermen, in 15000 stanzas. It is a magnificent work in five cantos, and the first Canto—*Siddhi Kandam* has now seen the light of day; others will follow in course of time. In Western literature, it is well known that the days of epic poetry are over. An epic poem needs not only breadth and beauty, but must also have a heroic theme and characters which appeal to the heart of the people and kindle a burning faith. The great epics of the world are national epics, dealing with the lives of the heroes of a nation in its dim and hoary past. The Iliad, the Odyssey and the Aeneid, are the supreme epics of the world. Even so, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are truly national epics and are still living forces today. The deep faith of a whole people is bound up with them in a manner which no later epic poem can hope to rival. Kalidasa's classical epic poems are the best of the epics of later days. But they are not cast in the same heroic mould as the

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older epics. Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' has breadth and beauty but not the truly epic grandeur and sublimity, and is often called by satirists a boudoir epic. Allegorical poems of Spencer's Faery Queen form another high type of literary composition. That type also is no longer possible today. The modern age demands brevity and modernness, and it has been well said that the modern age is pre-eminently the age of the lyric.

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar's great Poem Bharata Shakti is of stupendous dimensions, and hovers between allegory and epic. He has intended a fine story of the war of the Daivic (Divine), and the Asuric (Demon) forces in the modern world, and has made his Muse sing the victory of the higher powers. He has so projected his scheme of painting a great picture on the canvas of modern history, that he is able to show in that picture India's supreme achievement in the past and India's tireless travails today, and India's great and inevitable future, as the queen of beauty, romance, and spiritual splendour.

The plot is ingeniously conceived. No doubt the allegorical poem which maintains epic breadth and sublimity, will have an appeal to the head and heart of the people, as it contains not only the account of historical heroes, but also a detailed account of seers and prophets who are the supermen of the world. It is a grand epic of the universal Divine Spirit, and it

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shows a moral warfare and spiritual victory in addition to an eternal clash of arms between the two opposite forces of good and evil, the divine and the undivine in man, and in the world. It enables Poet Bharatiar to excel simultaneously in expressing and presenting poetic sublimity, philosophic profundity and the divine reality in the play of existence. We have in this Mahakavya the genuine and perfect picture of the Spirit of India which is the Bharata Shakti. He has used in this poem a hundred varieties of metres and his lines on heroes and saints are of memorable beauty.

The Bharata Shakti reaches a very high altitude of excellence. The hero of the Epic is a pilgrim of perfection and his sadhanas and sacrifice tend toward a true universal existence in the Divine super-consciousness. Bharata Shakti is truly "the inspired voice of India's Soul" as a great soul has said about it.

The Yogi-Poet is himself translating the grand epic into English verses. We can very well conclude this chapter by giving the substance of the Epic in the author's own words:

XIX. BHARATA SHAKTI

(*Continued*)

WHAT IS IT ?

A SCIENTIFIC discovery often takes the name of the scientist—e.g., Raman's Effect, Newton's Law etc. India, Bharata Varsha, has discovered a mystic Force. It is the dynamic energism of the Divine Spirit which is the essence of man and woman. That Energy is generated when the passive, peaceful mind communes with the Pure Spirit which is the Divine in man. This inner communion is otherwise called Yoga. The force thus generated is called the Yogic Force or the Pure Spiritual Force (Shuddha Shakti). The Yogins of Bharata are its discoverers and hence we call it "BHARATA SHAKTI". Bharata Shakti is the source of peace, bliss, light, knowledge, strength and freedom. It is the life and stuff of the ideal human existence. Ancient Bharata commanded the world because it had acquired this Divine Force. It fell into the dark vale of tears and slavery because it lost this saving Force. To rediscover and cherish this Divine Energy collectively is the way of regaining its magnanimous place in the world as a spiritual teacher of

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nations. This force is gained by Yoga. It elevates and unites humanity in Spiritual consciousness. It transforms men into God-men, and women into flames of Energy.

Bharata Shakti Mahakavyam is an Epic-Allegory which sings the progressive triumph of the Divine Bharata Shakti over the evil undivine forces that render the world a hell of miseries. It brings within its limitless scope the entire achievement of the human intellect, from the Vedic age down to the atomic age. It manifests the immortal Spirit in the collective life of humanity and endeavours to build a Spiritual socialism in which all live in Yoga with the Divine. Its root is allegory and its branches are epics. The life and teachings of inspired saints, prophets, the deeds of great heroes, the works of immortal poets and the essence of all systems of philosophy and Yoga, are luminously interwoven into the main tapestry of this spiritual allegory. The hero of the poem is Shuddha, the Pure Divine Spirit personified. After a series of trials in life and after practising all Yogas and religions and after many political and social experiments and after long meditation, he discovers the Divine Force (Bharata Shakti) and trains an assembly of Yogins up in the Himalayas and makes them through a course of mystic sadhana, power-houses and centres of that Divine Energy. These Yogins meditate long with the hero and each of them realises a universal

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truth. All their truths are collected into a new Gospel of Perfect Life called Yoga Siddhi. They live the truths and radiate them by modern means. They go as messengers of love, peace, harmony and felicity, serve humanity under the direction of Shuddha and achieve great things. The hostile undivine forces tremble and vanish before the Bharata Shakti radiating through these Yogins. By a sudden transformation, humanity realises the reality behind the mortal mask. Gradually, the perfect Yogins establish a new socialised spiritual life on earth. The whole theme is the history of the Inner Spirit expressed in a dynamic mental-vital-physical life. It envisages the planes of human evolution and arranges scenes and acts accordingly. It does not follow any chronological order while dealing with the psychology of human evolution. For the hero is the immortal Spirit itself which is beyond time and space limits. An English metrical translation of the Epic of Superman is in progress; in the meantime the substance of the Poem is given here.

CANTO I: SIDDHI WINS

I. INVOCATION

Tune the harp of life, O impersonal Artist, to felicitous notes of universal love and harmony. Inspire me

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to sing, O Light, the glories of Supermen and the vision of the New Era on earth.

Let thoughts swell like moon-kissed seas;
Let words spring like morning flowers.
Let visions flow in grand cascades
Of hues and joys and thrills of life.
Let Beauty dance in ecstasy
With tuneful dreams and truthful themes.
Let gems of earth adorn this crown
Of Godly Grace that rules our race.

2. NEW CREATION

God willed to dissolve the worn-out world and make a new world. The forces of destruction broke into a terrible thunder-deluge. Stars trembled and crumbled down. The universe was swept off by inundation. Elements dissolved into the ethereal void. The creative forces immersed into an arid silence.

Infinite Peace! Suddenly the Divine Will was activated by His Conscious Force. The AUM-Song shot forth from the seven-stringed Vina of the Divine Power. Atoms whirled around the mystic song. The Forces of protection and creation sprang up and the creative Vedic Hymn thrilled the ethereal vault. Air winged forth from ether; fire flared up; stars sparked out. Planets split forth spinning in the void. A force of equilibrium led their march to the rhythm of the

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Supreme Will. A new phenomenal world was built by the natural forces.

Again the fair universe sun-moon-eyed
Clad in seas, flowing with stream tresses,
Smiled with the rapture of creative joy
Bejewelled with green and golden opulence.

Up rose the majestic Himalayas; the Divine Splendour enthroned upon its snowy peak, created a New Heaven downhill and called it BHARATA or Holy Ind. It was made the garden of beauty, a treasure-house of wisdom and a dynamic centre of Divine Energism.

The Divine Force manifested itself into countless forms and species from amoeba to elephant. The wheel of evolution was set in motion. The human form appeared as the crown of cosmic creation. *Manu* the first man and *Mati* the first woman, as equal partners in life, cherished the human race and the Divine poured into them His conscious Force—the Bharata Shakti. They lived by labour, increased by love and flourished by divinity and their race cherished Dharma.

The rhythm of life was disturbed by egoistic forces; envy created enemies. Moods differed; divisions multiplied; wars ensued and undivine forces gained the upper hand. *Bharata*, the superman rose up with mighty spiritual strength and quelled the undivine forces. He started a new dynasty of supermen which put forth flowers of immortal virtue and

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heroism. The scions of that line were pure in spirit, noble in life, true in word, wise in action and bold in adventure. Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Arjun, Hanuman, Mahavira, Appar, Shankar, Ashoka, Jesus, Muhammad, Zoraster, Sivaji, Pratap, Guru-Govind, Rajaraja and such illustrious stars adorned its crown of glory. Towering above all came King Satya.

3. SATYA RAJ

Satyan was a spiritual titan, strong as a lion and compassionate like a sage. He was a joy to the good and a terror to the evil forces. Enthroned on universal love, he held the sceptre of Dharma and ruled over the heart of his subjects with the power of his broad-minded sympathy and self-sacrifice. He lived only to serve the world, and laurels of glory heaped upon his strong shoulders like hill upon hill. His queen was the chaste dawn-fair Indira, sweet, tender, lovely, patient and wise. She was his close companion in every walk of life, private or public. She helped him in statecraft. Their life was delicious like milk and honey. They cherished the country as their child. The servants of the State, the ministers, officers, spies and ambassadors were all honest, prudent, and sincere, conscious of their duties and responsibilities. No pride, envy, or grudge disturbed the harmony of civil administration. The

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country's welfare was their life. Siddhiman was the wise and able prime minister of Satyan. He was the man at the helm of state affairs. Vijaya was the heroic commander of the national militia. The illumined Sumati was the minister of education. He filled the land with art and culture. Chatura, the minister of industries made the land busy with various industries, and drove off poverty. Bharata Muni radiated his spiritual force, and served as teacher to the princes. All the functionaries were like so many channels of Dharma. The king was careful to know the wrong and do the right. He was ready at any time to redress grievances. He trained his people in good culture; he chose the worthy and placed them worthily. He spent money liberally for education, sanitation, arts, industries, commerce, defence, morality and for the felicity of his subjects. Fine culture was the brain, Dharma the heart, and industry the body of his statecraft.

The country in such a reign was a heaven of love, harmony, light and beauty. Nature gave its seasonal gifts in plenty. Birds and bards sang its glory. Its balmy breezes breathed divine hymns. Communal harmony flourished in the music of happy hearts. Fear, meanness, tyranny, slave-mentality, sloth, ignorance, poverty, deceit and treachery were unknown to them. Karma brought wealth, and Dharma victory.

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4. SIDDHINAGAR

King Satyan raised a new capital and called it Siddhinagar, the city of victory. The river Punya garlanded it. Nature beautified it, and arts glorified it. The Sun-flag wafted in the music of its high renown. The social life of the city flourished by cultural beauty and spiritual harmony. The king, hero, sage, poet, scholar, teacher, merchant, and labourer lived as so many limbs of the society, consecrating the fruit of their labour for the common good. Brahmacharya culture was the basis, family life the branches, the bliss of existence flowers and Godhood the fruit of life in this spiritual society. The city was clean and healthy. Its streets were well kept, properly arranged and properly occupied. Parks, theatres, schools, hotels, auditoriums, playgrounds, markets, artist-quarters were all neatly and fashionably built by skilful architects and engineers. Man and woman took equal part in public affairs. Woman was man's energy and inspiration. Man was woman's life and light. They lived in mutual harmony like word and sense in an inspired song. None feared, none and nothing frightened anybody. Everyone was conscious of his or her spiritual immortality and dared even death to save the country's honour. Hearts were united in psychic love.

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5. PRINCE SHUDDHA

Such was the king and such his Edenic land. The king and the queen desired to have a son to keep the line alive. They did penance and prayed to God. One fine morning, the king was meditating in the palace garden. The fragrant breeze murmured a tune of hope. Queen Indira came to him like a sweet heaven of joy. The thrill of her charming presence cheered the rising day. The king greeted her with delight and they meditated together. After that, the queen recounted a dream experience to her sire:

A Light of triple flame moon-cool and bright
Thrilled into me just before I woke up.
A splendid vision held me for a while;
A sudden gloom covered the sacred earth.
Demon forces red with vital rage
By sin and murder devastated it.
Stunned, I stood with terror, when I saw
A God-man rising like a giant Sun!
The hostile forces vanished before him
And peace was restored by his grace again.

The king felt a new exultation on hearing this when sage Bharata bright like a sacrificial fire and strong like a thunderbolt appeared there. The royal pair greeted him, seated him and related to him the above vision. The delighted sage explained the dream: "A celestial Light shall be your son; the dark forces that are to

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overshadow the peace of this sacred land, shall be dispelled by his Yogic force. The Bharata Shakti incarnate in him shall bring a new dawn of hope and joy to all humanity. Rejoice, O king, rejoice, O Queen!"

The royal pair thanked God, thanked the sage, and celebrated the happy day by feasts and gifts. The same day, the queen became pregnant. She shone like a golden dawn containing the Sun.

Earth smiled with joy and peace just as the splendid child saw the light of day. Sages hailed his coming and saints blessed him. The country prayed for his long life. The king was overjoyed at the birth of a divine child; he made rich gifts to charitable institutions. The whole country thrilled with the feast of art and music. Sage Bharata baptised the child and named it Shuddha, the pure one, and predicted that he will be the prophet of a new gospel, a new world and the spiritual father of a new divinised race. The child showed the mán.

Divinity glowed through his human garb;
 An occult sweetness smiled in tender lips.
 A mystic rhythm displayed in his gait.
 A charming wisdom sparked out of his words.
 His touch was an electric thrill of joy.

He blossomed every day into a fresh splendour of divinity. He was sent to the residential school of St. Bharata. The master kindled the innate genius of

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his royal disciple and taught him as quickly as he learnt, all the ancient and modern arts worth learning. He learnt the science of war and statecraft under the able tutelage of Siddhiman. The father now thought it wise to send the youthful prince round the country so that he could have direct knowledge of the state, its administration and the nature of his subjects. The prince accompanied by the wise premier went round the wide country and had varied experiences. He was eagerly expected everywhere. Kings gave him rich presents and the prince gave them away at once for public benefactions. He saw the holy Tamilnad resonant with the voices of seer-poets, he saw the sweet Andhra, the artistic Bengal, the cultured Benares, the famous Koshal, the brave Punjab, the heroic Rajputana, the industrious Kerala, the wealthy Guajrat, the healthy Mysore, and the adventurous Maharashtra. Kings offered him their daughters, but he preferred to remain a bachelor until his mission was fulfilled. He noticed the condition of the people and felt the shadow of hostile forces everywhere. He often contemplated over the future of his kingdom.

Now the minister and the prince reached Raighat where Shivaji was buried. The Premier here gave an inspiring account of Shivaji and how he built an empire by his righteous sword. The heroic exploits of Shivaji inspired Shuddha and he wished to visit next Panchavati where his Guru Ramdas did penance.

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SHANTA MUNI AT PANCHAVATI

Panchavati was a forest where Rama and Ramdas did penance. Rama's war with the demons began there. It was fed by the river Godavari.

Clear and crystal like a sage's heart,
Deep and sublime like an inspired verse,
Sweet like mother's milk, Godavari
Cherished the sylvan beauty with its love.
Its grand hills stood like a yogin in trance;
Its floral wealth floated in Vedic chants
Thrilling from the heart of hermitages
Which are centres of Divine communion.

Sublime hymns came swimming in the bird-voiced breeze. They were the messages of the forest gleams which were the cradles of Indian civilisation. The prince and the minister penetrated the forest and walked reverentially through the hermitages. Deer and cows, peacocks and swans and parrots greeted them. Even tigers and wolves lost their wild nature before the mild looks of Shuddha. He bowed to sages and had their benediction.

Now the prince stood where Rama once lived; Sage Shanta had his hermitage there now. He was the head of the assembly of sages who did Yoga there for a mighty purpose. His disciples led the honoured visitors to the sage. Shanta recognised Shuddha as a

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saviour and blessed him, and invited him to dinner. Gowri, the grand daughter of Shanta, served fruits and milk and salads. They dined under a wide-spread banian tree. Shuddha had a psychic attraction for Gowri even at first sight:

The Prince of divine charms was charmed to see
This sylvan Angel Gowri, fair and chaste
With fawn-like eyes, and swan-like gentle gait,
Flower-like smile and fire-like energy,
She too turned the corner of her eyes
To feast upon the splendour of the prince.
Eyes met eyes and heart attracted heart;
'I am for thee; thou art for me', said they.

Dinner over, Sage Shanta sang his Ramayana to the accompaniment of Gowri's Vina. Rama's righteous heroism, Bharata's justice, Lakshmana's faith and service, Guha's sincerity, and Hanuman's adventure inspired Shuddha. He saw a hostile force in Ravana mighty in head and body but poor in heart and character. Shanta related to Shuddha the presence of such an asuric force in Mavali, the hostile demon of Danavam whose evil agent, Kali, daily plotted the life of Shuddha and coveted the throne of Siddhi. The sage recounted to the prince the dangerous inroads of the hostile Kali into the peaceful and harmless Panchavati forest.

Now, who is this Kali?

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7 KALI, THE UNDIVINE FORCE

It is an irony of fate that brothers are sometimes enemies of each other. Kali was Satyan's brother but just his opposite in manners. The jealous Kali hated his elder and plotted against him, coveting his throne. The birth of prince Shuddha inflamed his rage. From Kalinagar, his capital, this despotic demon forged means to kill the prince, capture Satyan and usurp his throne. He went to Danavan, the secret vital Isle, and met the Asura Mavali who gave for his aid a Demon force. Mohi, the passionate imp, the sister of Mavali fell in love with him and married him. Mohi and Kali demonised the Kalinagar army and prepared for a terrible battle against Siddhi. Kali did his best to kill the prince by treachery and black magic. He sent his wicked agents behind the touring prince and laid dark plots. The wakeful Premier protected him and the Divine Grace defied the evil intentions of Kali. The cunning uncle sent a messenger to the prince at Raighat, inviting him to Kalinagar; the minister diplomatically regretted inability due to pressure of time. Kali was insulted by the reply and let loose an asuric force to invade Panchavati to kill the prince and capture the Premier. The impious army of Kali, fed with meat, wine, and egoism, hurried to the forest, scorching and devastating the villages on the way. Sages and yogins were the first targets of their

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destructive fire. To root out divinity and make India an empire of undivine forces was the mission of Kali.

8. THE FIRST WAR

Spies hurried forth and reported to the Premier. He at once sent for the Maharatta army and prepared for a battle. Shuddha was hearing the story of St. Ramdas next morning, when the whole forest was agitated by the howl of the Kali-forces setting fire to hermitages, and killing saints in cold blood. Shuddha stood up at once with drawn sword and said, "Protect the forest, noble Siddhiman, and I shall protect the saints! Let not an enemy escape!"

To day the Divine victory begins;
Righteous battle calls us all to arms!
Tremble Demons! Dharma's might is up!
Blow trumpets! march on and kill the foes!
Heroes of Bharat never know defeat!

Siddhiman hemmed the demons on all sides; the asuric canons barked out hell fire. The brave minister paid them in the same coin, ripped the demons in twain and captured their canons. Their limbs floated in the blood-red river. Their captain Veba, attacked Shuddha who was keeping guard over a hill where the saints and nuns had taken shelter.

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Veha drunk with wine and vain glory,
The tornado among the asuras,
Came yelling vengeance, and spitting hell fire;
But Shuddha's fire silenced his raging fire.
The discomfited demon then laid his hands
Upon the fair sex and as he approached
To carry away Shanta's brave daughter,
Shuddha's weapon cut his sinful arms
And down fell he like an uprooted tree.

Veha died repenting his sinful life. A letter from his pocket revealed the treacherous plan of Kali to kill the prince and capture Siddhi. The fire-spitting squadron of Kali had already been beaten by Siddhiman. Only a handful had escaped to tell Kali the tale of the tragic fight which made Godavari run red with asuric blood. The minister expected another invasion if Shuddha stayed in the forest. Shuddha knowing the situation gathered all the sages around the victory fire and after prayers addressed the saints thus:

My life-mission begins with this success;
The first battle against our foes is won;
And the foes of Dharma will come to fight again.
I shall fight the demon a second time;
I shall fell Kali and then throw off the sword,
To save the world through mighty Yogic Force.
Help me O saints; lead me to victory!

Sage Shanta then spoke at length of the coming disasters by asuric upsurgence. He described how Kali

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would escape to Danavan after his second defeat and bring reinforcements from Mavali to devastate the country and re-establish his evildom there. He then narrated how the dark tyranny of the hostile forces would be dispelled by the tremendous Bharata Shakti radiated by the Prince who would soon become the Yogi of the Himalayas. The saints showered flowers of blessings, upon Shuddha who took them all with him, including Shanta and Gowri, to Siddhinagar and gave them protection. They continued their sadhana there for a few months.

King Satyan was elated at the initial victory of his son and the whole country celebrated the occasion. The state praised Shuddha's bravery but he warned them of a second invasion by Kali and reminded them of the serious task ahead. He asked them all to be alert and ready, soon to meet the tremendous forces of his wicked uncle. Siddhiman seconded him, and Vijaya undertook to prepare a strong force for offence and defence.

CANTO II. SHUDDHA-GOWRI

I. THE PRINCE MARRIES GOWRI

One year passed peacefully. Shuddha actually shouldered all the royal responsibility. Satyan was getting old. One day he spoke before the parliament: "For years I have kept the lamp of Dharma aflame with glory

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up to this day. I now wish to leave it in charge of my worthy son and spend my last days in Yoga and spiritual service. I wish to dispel the darkness that is overshadowing our holy land owing to the impact of my envious brother, Kali. Let my son, by your common consent, take this sceptre from my aged hands, and give me freedom."

After due consideration, the ministers extolled the qualities and abilities of the crown prince, and acceded reverentially to the old king's wishes. The King and the Premier instructed Shuddha in practical politics, administration and statecraft. Then they proposed to marry him. Kings came and offered their daughters. Shuddha rejected all preferring to remain a bachelor until his mission was fulfilled. But the king came to know of his secret love for Gowri, Shanta's daughter. To ascertain this he held a festival on the prince's birthday. Saints and sages chanted Vedic hymns kindling holy fire. Bharata Muni explained the aim and methods of existence. After receiving his blessings, the prince was led to a charming flower garden in which the choicest beauties of the country had gathered to offer flowers and presents to the crown prince. Shuddha received gifts from them all and gave rich gifts in return. But he showed no sign of attachment to any damsel. No jewelled charm could attract his heart.

At last the simple holy Gowri came
Adorned in pure virtues brighter than jewels,

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Like a lovely swan fashioned by lightnings;
Her lily hand put forth a lotus bud,
With dawn-like smile and charming bashfulness.
A mystic something moved the prince's heart
As he gave her the richest gift of all—
His beaming look brimming with psychic love.
Both forgot the world and lived a while
Speaking without a word 'You are my love'.
Flashing another hint of supreme love
She went away leaving a light behind.

The king now was filled with hopeful joy. He consulted his ministers privately and then his queen who was proud of having such a holy daughter-in-law. They learnt from Sage Shanta the renowned royal ancestry of Gowri.

Shanta gave a thrilling account of the South Indian kings and saints and heroes who were connected with her ancestors. He also described how in the Sangam days Tamil Nad was an empire with colonies in the Indian ocean and with a maritime superiority which made her the mistress of the seas. Intermarriage united the Chera, Chola and the Pandya kings. They once established a united Tamil empire. After many renowned kings had ruled, Varaguna Pandya became the monarch of the Tamilnad. His minister was St. Manicca. Initiated by a Divine Master, the minister became a seer-poet and a recluse, and spent the royal treasures in building a rich temple

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at Perundurai. The king arrested, imprisoned, and tortured him. A divine miracle opened the king's eyes. He then released the saint from the prison. The saint spent the rest of his days at Chidambaram making his life a song-offering to the Supreme. He attained final beatitude after collecting all his songs in a book called Tiruvachakam. The Pandyan too in deep repentance of his persecutions, gave the sceptre to his prince Maravarman and renounced the world. Maravarman, a disciple of Manicca was religious-minded. He too crowned his son and spent his last days in Yoga. The son too followed the example of his father. Our sage Shanta was a descendant of these saintly kings. He too renounced his kingdom and spent his days in tapasya when a terrible war broke out there. The enemy destroyed the line altogether. The daughter of Shanta escaped but died leaving a daughter. Shanta Muni picked up this child and came away to Panchavati. That child was our Gowri. Shanta gave an interesting account of how Gowri was trained among saints as a saint, and how she was educated and equipped for life.

Satyan and Indira were very pleased and said with one voice "Gowri would add lustre to our line". The king took the consent of his son in the matter. Then the lovers were allowed to meet privately and exchange their views and vows. Shuddha said to her:

This psychic tie is not a passion-chain;

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It is a union of the soul with soul
To gain-soul force and serve the good of souls.

Both of them now knew their life purpose. Shanta blessed them and told them how Ramakrishna and Sarada, Valluvar and Vasuki led a pure spiritual life, and how Vivekananda, a bachelor, did wonderful things. The lovers vowed to lead such a sublime spiritual life. Shanta then initiated both of them in the Yoga of Energy (Shuddha Tantra) by which the husband can draw power from the pure wife, in meditation. Shuddha and Gowri were two currents of the Divine force. Their marriage was celebrated with useful ceremonies and displays of art. Bharata Muni taught them the secret of success in the family life.

Like earth and rain-giving sky they unite,
Like sun and rays, like land and plant in heart.—
One spirit in two component bodies,—
They perfect themselves and perfect the world.

The king gave them a garden palace enwrapped in floral beauty and vernal charm. Gowri and Shuddha did the mystic Yoga of Energy-culture. They spent their time in study, contemplation, meditation, music, and service to the state. The king gave his son first the responsibilities of the state and military obligations. Being thus satisfied with his abilities, the king and the ministers proposed to crown him on an auspicious day.

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2. KING SHUDDHA

On the day previous to his coronation, Shuddha seriously contemplated on the world, the times and the aims of human life. His soul cried for spiritual freedom. But the sweet Gowri cheered him up by telling him the story of Janaka, Choodalai, Ashoka, Manuniti Chola and other famous personalities who had lived the life and saved their souls. She pointed out to him that life is a precious gift of God for service and self-perfection. Pessimism shattered, the prince assumed the full responsibilities of the entire state.

He was crowned before the people's assembly. Satyan gave him his sceptre and laid down his royal burden. Sage Bharata crowned Shuddha with his holy hands and saints and elders blessed him. The old king gave a report of the country's progress under his reign and the lines on which the new king had to conduct the state affairs. Minor kings expressed their loyalty and co-operation. Amidst a shower of flowers and cheers, Shuddha Raj delivered his momentous Proclamation. He gave his people full liberty to co-operate with him and suggest to him the ways and means of establishing a righteous rule in the land and of conquering the hostile forces that were preparing for a heavy attack on the capital.

I am body; the nation is my soul;
The people's voice shall be my potent voice.

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Their heart's my heart; and their will is my will.

And their happiness is my happiness.

I bear the crown to serve and always serve.

Gowri too adorned the throne with her sire. After witnessing the coronation, Satyan retired to a solitary grove and spent his life doing Yoga in the company of saints. Shanta muni and the saints with the consent of Shuddha-Gowri started northward, to prepare a spiritual centre up on the Himalayas. Before parting, Shanta prophesied the future and initiated Gowri in the Yoga of leaving one body and living in another. Shuddha requested the saint to inspire his army and people with a series of holy discourses. Shanta held discourses for fifteen days on the life of Sri Krishna and on the Bagavad Gita. He advised all to live in the Gita spirit and consecrate themselves to serve the country in God's name. Shanta took leave of Shuddha after telling him certain things of a secret nature.

3. THE SIEGE OF SIDDHI

Shuddha and Gowri worked for the public good day and night. Their reign was crowned by peace and plenty, joy and harmony. There was contentment in the heart of the people but the fear of Kali increased everywhere.

Kali did not attend the coronation. He refused to recognise Shuddha as the king of Siddhi. Mohi

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brought terrible demons from Danavam as Kali was reorganising a formidable army for the siege and capture of Siddhi. Shuddha had already started on the reorganisation of the national militia so as to meet the enemy at any time. He took special care to teach military science to all his subjects. Gowri organised a woman's force and supervised supplies and medical aid. Everything was ready; but there was a diplomatic silence for one year.

The king in the meanwhile inspired his soldiers through bards to sing the heroisms of brave supermen like Pratap Singh. The soldiers took a vow to sacrifice themselves for their country as Rana Pratap did.

Kali was fuming with rage at the total annihilation of his army at Panchavati. Shuddha's victory, coronation, popularity and indomitable strength kindled his jealousy into a hell fire of vengeance. He had a formidable army with ingenious weapons; yet he was afraid of a second defeat. However, he conspired with his demoralised hosts to penetrate peacefully in the garb of merchants and Tantric sanyasins, acrobats, and religious mendicants, to create factions and a state of anarchy and chaos, and so enter the city by such back-door tricks. Ahamparan, Papasenan and other hypocrites undertook this cunning adventure and entered the Siddhi gates as Tantric sanyasins with a train of

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winning whores and wicked wenches, dressed as pious Shaktis.

It was the Kritika day; the city observed fast and prayers. Satyan was holding a religious concert in his holy garden. The adventures of Lord Skanda who defeated Sura were sung. At that time a host of strange monks and nuns entered the garden singing aloud the name of Skanda; Satyan enquired who they were. "We are saints, Sir, who traverse the land carrying the name of the Mother Parashakti. We live on public charity away from the world of lust and dust". Satyan allowed them to live in the town; but Shuddha sent spies dressed as sanyasins among them. For a month they pretended to be siddhas and soothsayers. More and more of them came and occupied the nooks and corners of the city. They gently enticed women and ignorant men and secretly demoralised them. After a month merchants came as wandering traders and vendors of various goods. After that came labourers who obtained work in the military and public works department. All these later arrivals joined with the Tantric sanyasins as disciples and started their mischief. Hypocrisy hoodwinked the ignorant masses. They were tempted, divided and demoralised. The sham shaktas encouraged drink, opium, whordom, theft and debauchery in the name of ecstatic dance and phallic worship. Then slowly they preached sedition and

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disloyalty. The spies of Shuddha watched these hypocrites and suddenly discovered secret taverns, butcheries, and brothels in a city which abhorred these evils. Shuddha himself went incognito among them and found out the hostile forces behind these evils. He took steps at once to arrest the dealers in wine, women, flesh and secret vices. The Intelligence Department brought appalling stories of orgies, illicit intercourses, and secret vices in either sex, young and old. Shuddha at once knew the plan of Kali; he caught hold of the hypocritic monks and the rogues of Kalinagar and rounded them up. One midnight, their evil associates rose in rebellion with smuggled arms crying "Down with Shuddha! Live long Kali!" At the same time, the city heard Kali's forces roaring out vengeance outside the fort. Siddhi was thus attacked from inside and outside. Cannons barked out at the iron fort of the city. Shuddha called his soldiers to arms at once and gave instructions to Vijaya. Vijaya engaged a strong force to put down the rebellion within the fort and sent a formidable army to fight the enemy beyond the rampart. The king called for a cabinet meeting, discussed means and measures to save the country from the murderous Kali. Siddhiman planned to attack Kali here and at Kalinagar directly. Satyan the old heroic king undertook the siege of Kalinagar with the aid of the troops that were ready at Pancha-

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vati centre. He told them the story of the heroes of old and assured victory. The assembly looked at him with awe and respect as he came putting on his armour. Satyan consoled Indira by telling her the heroic sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur. He told his son the peerless example of Guru Gobinda Singh. The sword had entered his spirit. He vowed to conquer not only Kali but also the demon of Danavam. He took leave of Shuddha and went straight to Panchavati which was then converted into a military cantonment. He led the troops from there to Kalinagar and besieged it. He applied his unequalled military tactics to batter and shatter the fort of sins; he cut off the road to Siddhi so that Kali could get no reinforcements there.

The formidable army of Kali besieged the fort of Siddhi.

The gloomy thud of cannons shook the fort
 With storms of hell-fire wild and horrible.
 Siddhi's heroes discharged shot for shot,
 And well-aimed thunder blow for foeman's blow!

The battle rages wild. Mayan flies before the chasing Siddhi troops. Vijaya, the commander, captures and kills him and his gang. Many enemy soldiers surrender and are taken prisoners. They reveal to Siddhiman all the secrets and target points of Kali. The discomfited Kali mad with unrighteous

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rage, collects the remnant of his forces and leads a vehement attack upon the Siddhi troops. He brings new weapons and firearms which do considerable havoc. Even the brave fighters of Vijaya lose courage.

Now Shuddharaj starts to the battle-field, after dictating military tactics to his generals. He takes leave of Gowri who is anxious to follow him to the battle-field. The husband forbids her saying that the duty of the gentie sex must be nursing, feeding, first aid, medical help and allied works. Gowri tells him of brave heroic ladies like Alli, Mangammal, Chand Bibi, Lakshmibai, Durgabai, Ahalyabai and others who faced the battle-field and won laurels. Shuddha reminds her of the better use of the feminine energy and speeds off to the front. Gowri, who knows the art of warfare, follows him at a distance dressed as a soldier.

Shuddha inspires his army by an impressive speech upon the Marava, Rajput, Sikh and Gurkha heroes, who fought bravely and kept the national flags flying proudly on their ramparts. National songs thrill the war atmosphere. The spirited soldiers fight with redoubled vigour under the command of their King.

Shuddha advanced onward and met Kali at a strategic point. He spoke to Kali frankly condemning his treachery and wickedness to his own brothe

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and called him a wretched traitor who had betrayed his country to the hostile forces. He pointed to him the fate of mean traitors like Jayachand who betrayed Pritiviraj, Shaktisingh who betrayed the great Pratap Singh and Rana Singh who became Mahabat khan and devastated Mewar. Traitors are the cursed names of history. Shuddha explained to him the meaning of life and the duties of a man, a hero and a king. He quoted great law-givers like Manu, Valluvar, Parashara, etc. His voice and words touched the heart of Kali; he was ashamed of his deeds; he could not meet the argument of the righteous Shuddha nor encounter his looks. Something made him tremble before the Pure One. The gun slipped from his hands and his head reeled. At that moment Mohi intervened with her demons and inflamed his vital egoism by reminding him that mercy is weakness, repentance is cowardice, and the idea of sin is false; to live dangerously with a will to fight and subdue the world is the only practical philosophy. She gave him a strong liquor and sent him back to the field.

Cannons thundered again. Weapons clashed with weapons like lightnings with winged lightnings. Kali already bitten by conscience had not the strength to stand the righteous sword of Shuddha. Dead tired, he fell from his seat. His troops deserted him. But Shuddha raised him up and sent him safely back to his camp saying "Enough for today; I would

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not kill an enemy already killed by fatigue and repentance. Go; but come tomorrow". Kali hurried to his camp with deep remorse and fell into a repentant reverie. The prick of conscience was keener than the cut of a sword. He seriously penned a peace treaty and held the peace flag. But Mohi came and pulled it down and intoxicated him with the Power-wine. She taught him treachery and crooked ways, gave him another set of demons and despatched him to the front at the dead of night.

Siddhi was fast asleep. Shuddha was meditating with Gowri. Spies hurried with dangerous news. While they were delivering it, the enemy cannons were heard. "Kali has returned to storm our fort. He has taken me by surprise; I shall finish his egoism and vanity" said Shuddha as he made haste to the battle front. Gowri in the dress of a hero followed him unknown. Pretending to withdraw, Kali gently led him into the jungle where he had managed to prepare a deep trench and cover it with leaves and grass. Weaponed asuras hid there ready to kill Shuddha.

4. GOWRI'S LAST WORDS

Now the enemies hemmed Shuddha at a strategic point near the trench. Ten feet more; Shuddha might have fallen into the hellish trench. Kali was aiming a shot at him saying "Die, righteous devil!"

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At that time a hero entered the thick of the fight and pushed Kali into the very pit dug for the King of Siddhi. The demons mistaking him for the enemy, gave him some sound blows. "I am Kali, Kali" cried the unrighteous devil. The demons spared him but mocked at his weakness, encouraged him to fight again and sent him out. Shuddha in the meanwhile flew to a safe quarter and prepared himself for an attack. The battle raged again vomiting hell fire. Again Shuddha was caught in a cunning trap. Kali's general was about to kill him when the young hero ripped his body to death. But alas! a fatal blow struck the youth down. Shuddha who escaped danger found Gowri in the garb of that young soldier. He laid her on his lap and tended her wounds. Gowri breathed her last with these words:

My lord, I am destined to cast away
 This body since its object is finished.
 The pure immortal Spirit which I am
 Shall live for thee in another body;
 I leave this frame to work for thee elsewhere.
 I go only to come again in time
 With greater will and grander energy.

Gowri closed her eyes for ever. "She has fulfilled her destiny", said the fond husband as he sent her body quickly to the hospital. This accident encouraged the enemy to advance quite near to the fort.

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Shuddha fought with superhuman will-power. Kali ran desperately from the field. Our hero felled him with a heavy blow at the back. All his troops had melted away. The remaining few quickly managed to carry him away to Kalinagar. Kali went accepting defeat for the second time but his vital egoism cried for revenge!

5. SATYAN TAKES OFF

Satyan had already seized Kalinagar, occupied it and possessed all the secret records of Kali. He came to know a good deal about Danavam and Mavali from some records, and also about the secret weapons of the demons from Mohi's notes. Satyan captured Kali and Mohi at the gate of the city and threw them into prison. But one night Mohi escaped from the prison, contrived to bring a swift plane, and took off Kali to an unknown destiny. The indefatigable Satyan at once chased them in a faster plane. He knew that Kali and Mohi with a few Demons were going to Danavam. So he left Kalinagar (now Satyanagar) in charge of an able general, sent a detailed letter to Shuddha through a secret messenger and took off with a determination to put down the archfiends of Danavam who were the plagues of humanity. The whole country admired the old hero and offered prayers for his victory.

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6. THE SECOND VICTORY

Siddhinagar was jubilant; Shuddha raised a palace where Gowri fell and dedicated it to the cultivation of arts and sciences. The peace conference was held there. Satyan spoke touchingly about the heroes who gave their life to save their country's honour, and about the adventurous fighters for the victory of Siddhi. He distributed medals and rewards to worthy servants of the State. He then reviewed the changed conditions of the world, the hostile forces at work in every land and predicted the future events as far as he could. He said finally:

My sword has won a second victory;
But sword's victory never restores peace.
My next and best victory shall be won
Not by weapons, but by Godly force.
In troubled waters I seek the shore of peace,
I voyage in the ship of Divine Grace!

CANTO III. TOWARDS PERFECTION

I. IN SEARCH OF TRUTH

The bloody scenes of the two terrible wars haunt the vision of Shuddha. His mind is agitated by conflicting thoughts. He dislikes sovereignty, ease, luxury and the burden of royalty. He yearns for the calm serenity of inner peace and an atmosphere of spiritual magnetism.

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He contemplates on the play of the selfish egoistic hostile forces in every sphere of existence--religious, political, social, aesthetic, economic and cultural:

The dawning sun paints earth with tender smiles
But clouds of mind-born sorrows taint it black.
God and Nature gave us a blissful earth;
But man and his nature made it a hell.
Felicity is radiant in all;
But the magic thrill of its harmony
Is marred by mental veils and vital storms.

Life-bare asceticism, spirit-bare materialism, the ennuied pomp of patent creeds, the dilettante curiosity of intellectualism, the euthanasian tenacity of the orthodox, the vagrant verbicide of the syllogist, the megalomania of isms, pitiless militarism of power politics, the cunning diplomatism of statecraft--have all made men victims of their whims and habits coercing and strangling the freedom of thought and growth. Hatred and discord have shattered the harmony of social life, and led humanity to wars, turmoils, struggles for existence and cataclysms. How to bring this divided humanity under the pavilion of unity? Flowers of different hues beautify a garden with their perfumed smile. Birds of different feathers lead a songful life of harmony in the same fruit tree. Bees live a wonderful socialised life in the same hive humming with industry. The stars of several groups march

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in discipline to the rhythm of a mysterious Will. Cannot humanity, the six-sensed intellectual beings, live then a collective life of peace, bliss, beauty, love and harmony? I must find out that light whose rays can pierce the dark hazards of separative egoism and restore harmony in the world.

Thus Shuddha contemplated and sought an antidote of peace for humanity poisoned by selfish egoism. His mother and the ministers pressed him to wear the crown and wield the sceptre for the good of the country. Relatives tried to tempt him through beautiful damsels. Kings offered their daughters to him. They pressed him to remarry and be happy. He said:

How can I be happy when all are unhappy?

When all are happy, happy shall I be.

He sought a way to solve the riddle of life tortured by the mental pricks and vital thorns.

One day Siddhiman compelled him to sit upon the throne. Shuddha gathered the peoples' representatives and minor kings that day and gave a new charter of freedom for the country. He traced the history of mankind from monarchy to social republic, from monism to atheism and showed how humanity was unhappy despite so many isms. "No religion has protected humanity from the blood prints of fanaticism, vain ceremonial poms, pitiful martyrdoms, ruthless persecutions, and mutual killing in the name of God and

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salvation. Man must transcend himself to the height of his Godhood. He must come out of the divided home of intellectual creeds and separative ego and live a universalised soul-life in Yoga with the Divine who is the Man within the man. To this consummation I shall do tapasya, said the King after proclaiming a new charter of liberty.

2. RENUNCIATION

The monarchy ended by that charter and then a republic of the people's representatives began. Shuddha appointed Indira, Siddhiman, Bharata, Vijaya, Sumati, Chatura and other wise souls as guardians and advisers to the republic. He then placed the crown and the sceptre on the throne and repaired to the solitary grove to continue his meditations.

Indira and the ministers entreat him to come back to the normal royal life. He tells them about the great renuciation of Mahavira, Chandragupta, Tayumanar, etc., and the good they did to the world. He explains that his is not any idle other-worldly renunciation; and that his mission demands complete detachment from the worldly contact. The ministers shut him in a pleasure palace full of attractions, distractions—the dance of beauty, and the songs of tempting sirens. Unconcerned with the play of voluptuous luxuries around, Shuddha sat under a banyan tree on the bank of the

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Punya river, and contemplated on his mission. He often heard a voice saying 'Quit'. The birds on the tree, the breeze playing with flowers, and the river mumbling by said to him 'Quit!'. One evening, Shanta Muni suddenly appeared before him and said, "This is the hour! Quit! Onward! God shall guide you on! We have prepared the ground for your work. Gowri's Spirit has descended into a very pure soul at Danavam. All is getting ready for the manifestation. Go on, prepare yourself! I shall come at the opportune moment to take you with me."

Shuddha escaped from the closely guarded palace in the garb of a servant. The ministers searched for him everywhere but in vain. Bharatamuni consoled them by explaining the mission of Shuddha for which he renounced home and throne. The mother and the premier managed the kingdom according to his proclamation with the help of the Republican Assembly. Peace was maintained in the kingdom for a few years.

THE PILGRIM OF TRUTH

Shuddha wandered like an ordinary man among men, studying the world, seeking saints and seers and searching for Truth everywhere. Giving himself completely into Divine hands, he lived a pure contemplative life meditating in forests and lonely places, living upon what chance brought him. Some called

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him mad; some were curious about him; some mocked him; others loved him. There were fair damsels who offered their hands to him. Wise men respected and served him. Equal to praise and blame, stone and flower, the saintly Shuddha wandered from place to place in search of Reality. He never begged anything from anybody. He never grudged to work for his bare necessities. No one could find out that he was the king of Siddhi. He lived from within, and sought enlightened seers for his guidance. He saw the changing colours of the human life, dazzling today, decaying tomorrow, and swept away the day after by the swift current of time. He saw bubble reputations bursting into emptiness. He studied the nature of men and women from birth to death and surveyed the cockpit of existence from family bickerings to political wars. Kingdoms established by the human sword were terrible wardoms. He saw everywhere the immoral designs of Kali. From atheism to pure monism he surveyed the religious camps.

4. KAMAPURI

One evening, the pilgrim of Truth happened to walk along the streets of Kamapuri—a place influenced by the evil genius of Kali. The hypocrites who escaped from Kalinagar were here as high-priests of materialism and immorality. The sham Vamacharins that were

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beaten off from Siddhi took secret refuge here. These lecherous drunkards, in the name of Tantra of which they knew nothing, encouraged whores, libertines, swindlers, plunderers and murderers of innocent animals to glut their stomach. Our pilgrim saw men and women singing erotic songs and dancing in drunken frenzies. A stout wench, Vami by name, saw the beautiful Shuddha and dragged him into the Puja mandir, which was really a brothel and a tavern. There Kami, her rival, passionately loved Shuddha. Our hero kindled their jealousy by praising their painted beauty now more, now less. They vied with each other for the embrace of the handsome youth and indulged in garrulous, indecent criticisms. The house was divided by their quarrel. They reproached one another and came to blows. Kami and Vami challenged each other to a sword play and envy killed them both. In the meantime, Shuddha escaped from the house of infamy and sought shelter in a Stupa with Uttama the Buddhist. Uttama told Shuddha how the place had degenerated and how all his efforts to reform the lecherous drunkards had failed. In the morning Shuddha with the Buddhist went to the Puja mandir where a multitude had gathered around the dead bodies of Kami and Vami. Shuddha took this opportunity to explain to them clearly the meaning of Tantra and Shakti Sadhana; he gave a detailed description of the Divya or Shuddha Tantra in which the two

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forces united psychically. He then condemned the nuisance of drink and debauchery. Some of the audience were convinced and they joined with Shuddha to form a Dharma Sangha. Uttama too helped the Sangha heart and soul with his followers. Day by day the town was reformed. Brothels were closed; liquor shops were no more and animal slaughter stopped. Men and women led a legitimate married life. A school was started to educate children. A reform committee was established. After that Shuddha went with Uttama to Bouddhapuri.

5. BOUDDHAPURI

Bouddhapuri greeted Shuddha with great love and respect on the full-moon day; that was the day when Buddha attained knowledge. Dharmasena, the head of the monks, gave a musical discourse on Buddha and his teachings. Buddha's renunciation and moral codes appealed to Shuddha and he lived the life of a Bhikshu practising Buddhism sincerely. He studied Dhammapada and contemplated on it besides serving the masses for better ends. But still he found no solution for his riddle. A world free from wars and hostile forces was his ideal.

6. JAINAPURI

At this time, Jinananda, a Jain Sadhu came there. Shuddha was attracted by the calm serene tender-

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hearted love of the Jain. Initiated in the austerities of a Jain life, Shuddha followed Jinananda to Jainapuri. On the way the latter related to him the life and teachings of Mahavira and other Tirthankaras. Living in a mandir, Shuddha studied Tatvartha Prakash and other Jaina books and meditated upon the Perfect One. He saw peace in non-injury. He liked Jainism but could not support sectarian quarrels. He patched up the quarrel between the Digambaris and the Shwetambaris. He preached to them true Jainism, which united all beings in love, peace and self-knowledge. He created unity and obtained their respect.

7. CHRISTUPURI

Still his heart yearned for the Divine Reality. One day Jesudas, a true follower of Lord Christ came there, and became his friend. The gentle manners of Jesudas attracted Shuddha and he followed him to Christupuri. The people there were well educated on modern lines; they lived a clean life of culture and industry. Shuddha was very pleased with their congregational prayers. On Christmas eve, Jesudas gave a musical discourse on Lord Jesus Christ, His teachings and the meaning of the Crucifixion and the conditions for the descent of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Shuddha appreciated the true Christian love and service and lived in a monastery

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reading and practising the Holy Book. Jesudas read the original Bible in Hebrew and Greek and explained clearly the heart of Christ. To be perfect like the Father of creatures and to bring His Kingdom upon earth by love and sacrifice and self-knowledge is the essence of the words of Christ. The Pure One contemplated on this truth. He lived as a true Christian soul. Churches vied with each other to convert him. "I belong to Christ, but not to church", said he. He could not accept the divided Churchianity. He saw missions hating one another, and other religions. The town was divided by churches. Some times from words they came to blows. One day, there was a terrible fight between the differing churches and all of them approached Shuddha for mediation. He expounded the real meaning of the Testaments old and new. He explained the spiritual rebirth of man and the spiritual kingdom on earth envisaged by Jesus Christ. They heard him willingly but were not willing to unite. On the contrary, they forged dangerous weapons of mass slaughter. Shuddha left the place in search of a religion which solidly united men in one brotherhood

8. TRUE ISLAM

The seeker felt hungry at heart. One Abdulla Mowlvi was doing his evening Namaz. Shuddha observed his fervour and concentration. After prayer the

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Seeker asked him why he prayed singly. "I am an Islamian; I regard all as my brothers. There is no Masjid in the vicinity and hence I pray alone facing the Kaba" said he. Both became friends. The Mowlvi took him to Masudipuri. It was Ramzan day and all were fasting and praying. There was a mass prayer in the evening. Thousands of Musulmans without any difference of social status had gathered there. Thousands of voices roared out the Kalima and the united prayer thrilled the Seeker's heart. After prayer the Mowlvi and another savant gave a full and impressive account of the Prophet and the Alquoran. He liked the spirit of close brotherhood and perfect equality among the Musulmans. He lived in a Masjid, learnt Alquoran from Abdulla Mowlvi, and followed it. One day he heard that some hooligans in the name of Islam were doing havoc in a Hindu street. He went there with Abdulla Mowlvi. The Mowlvi cried out to the rude mob, "Kill me before you touch a Hindu." Shuddha cried out, "Kill me before you touch a Musulman." The fight at once stopped. They had such a regard for the Mowlvi and Shuddha whom they knew as true devotees of God. Then both of them explained the spirit of Islam. "Islam is a religion of faith, brotherhood, peace and surrender to the unique Divine. The God of Islam is the same God that other religions worship and the soul of a Musulman

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is the same as the soul of a Hindu. Kalima (the word), Namaz (prayer), fasting (Roza), alms (Zakat), pilgrimage (Haj,) these five are the pillars of Islam. A true Musulman has sincere regard for the religion of others. The morning prayer is for the confession of one's commissions and omissions. The noon prayer saves the soul from hellish sins; the evening prayer gives strength of will and protects us from enemies. The night prayer gives peace and purity. The Musulman is obliged to spread peace and harmony around him. He must do charity to all. He must learn and cultivate true knowledge and right manners. He must not swear, lie, break his promise, curse, accuse anyone or covet another's possessions; he must keep from all sinful acts like drinking wine, fornication, murder, etc. He must never do harm to any creature, by any means." Islam unites men and does not divide them. It never advocates sword-and-fire atrocities. Thus both of them educated the masses. Peace was restored. But Shuddha thought deeply over the union of the two communities and continued his pilgrimage.

9. GURUDWARA

Sadhu Sundarsingh, a tall and fair Panjabi saint, met him one day; both became friends. The Sadhu read to the Seeker the Granth Sahib and sang Sukhmani. They gave him a new peace and spirit. He

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lived in the Sikh sanctuary and practised that religion. Sundarsingh gave him a thrilling account of Guru Nanak, Ramdas, Teg Bahadur, Govindasingh and the bravery of the Akalis. During this time a Zorastrian named Sethna (Chetana) met him. From him he learnt the life and teachings of Lord Zarathushtra and meditated upon Light. He found a similarity between the Vedic and the Avestic cults. Now he desired to study the Vedas in detail.

10. VEDAPURI

He was passing through Vedapuri one day when Satyananda, a great saint and Vedic scholar taught him the true meaning of the Vedas and the allied inspired works written by God-men. He also gave him an impressive account of Vidyaranya, Shankar, Rammohan, Dayananda, Appayya Dikshit and others who were the torch-bearers of the Vedic and Agamic cults.

Vedapuri, once a centre of Rishi-Knowledge, became now a pandemonium of caste-ridden megalomaniacs with jackal brain and bulldog tongue barking incessantly at their fellow-citizens. They were self-boasting cowards who hailed the past glory and never cared for the present and the future advance. They were sectarian enemies living together and their only qualification was that they were great

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grandsons of Vedic scholars. Each street in Vedapuri had rival teachers, rival books, rival disciples, rival poets and rival miraculous-falsehoods and rival humbugs. There were many Gods but none cared to worship the One God whose glory the Vedas chanted. The teachers were busy in self-glorification and in despatching rich disciples (slaves) to Vaikuntha or Kailasa. Vaikunthamani, the greatest humbug of Vedapuri, an incarnation of egotism, offered to send devotees to Vaikuntha. He was supposed to have four arms; two supplementary arms were shown only to faithful slaves and to those who went up to Vaikuntha by his grace. His poet, Parama Dasa, sang a long poem of wonderful falsehoods; he said there such things: "Vaikunthamani descended directly from Vaikuntha in the Sun-car driven by Indra and Kubera. It is a sin to say that he was born of a woman. The whole universe followed the will of Vaikuntha who can send any one to hell or heaven etc., etc." His rival Kailasamani in the same tone offered to send his disciples to Kailasa and the only thing necessary was to receive ashes from his hands and mutter his name. Another boaster was quick and business-like in despatching Bhaktas to Goloka or Brahmaloaka, for every world was at his command and he could make or mar anyone.

Caring little about the practical world before their eyes, these division-mongers kept the masses

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in the dark, never taught them the Vedas but played on their ignorance to fatten their own purse. It was a sin to talk of another Guru and one must close eyes and ears when he saw or heard him. A true devotee must not think even of God; he must be a helpless slave of his teacher who did nothing for him except despatching him to the unknown Beyond! This world was a sinful hell and life here was a painful dream. This other-worldly tendency weakened Vedapuri so much that no valour, adventurous spirit nor courage was left in its citizens who were fast entering other religions or going to heaven by the grace of the fanatic teacher. They were reduced to poverty and misery; but they never failed to pour tons of Ghee into fire and pots of milk upon stone idols. Sectarianism was thus the source of all superstitions, fears, social evils and political slaveries. There was untouchability, unseeability, unknowability, but no ability to think, reason and comprehend the reality of things.

Shuddha with the aid of Satyananda boldly came forward with the spirit of Dayananda to reform the misguided citizens and restore Vedic cult in Vedapuri. He exposed the humbug of imposters, condemned the other-worldly tendencies of the masses, and their slave mentality. Vaikunthamani pretended to assume the form of Narasinha to tear this reformer-Hiranya to pieces and throw his body to hell-dogs.

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Shuddha, knowing his cowardice, challenged him to a duel. The coward engaged assassins to cut him off. Shuddha gave a proof of his strength to them. The villains fled in fear. Vaikuntha threatened to call Yamaraj to take the enemy direct to hell and throw him into fire. No Yamaraj dared to approach Shuddha. Kailashmani acted the Rudra Kali; but the brave hero was a proof to Kalis and Rudras. He exposed the emptiness of these humbugs every day and in the open daylight. Vaikunthamuni thought of frightening the brave soul by manifesting tiger teeth and four arms. Shuddha extracted the false teeth and proved that the extra two hands were those of Sevakadas stretched from behind the curtain... Thus disillusioning the masses, Shuddha and Satyananda held Vedic classes, prepared teachers and brought the light of the Vedas to every home and the unity of consciousness to every heart.

Shuddha gathered all the inhabitants of the town and preached to them the true Vedic religion. "God is One and the many are the manifestations of His conscious force. All can attain God-consciousness by inner communion; it is sadhana and not meaningless ceremonies and other-worldly tendencies that brought bliss" said he. People were convinced. They taught by example and precept the pure disciplines of daily life from ablution to meditation, and

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the duties of a householder from morn till night. People felt the spiritual and hygienic effect of the Vedic disciplines. The rival teachers became humble students. They gave all their money earned by playing on the animal instincts of the ignorant masses, for Vedic propaganda. Shuddha reformed the society by giving liberal education to all and by stopping dowry, caste fooleries, untouchability, etc., and by allowing remarriage to women. Fanatics cried him down for a time; but his voice had its potent effect at last, for it was the voice of Truth whose source is the Veda. Shuddha trained some as Vedic teachers, some as brave heroes to maintain discipline and others as artisans and social workers. Vedapuri lived a reformed new life from that day. But the hero had to leave the place one night since a big zemindar forced him to marry his daughter who loved him too. He could not allow temptation to possess him; moreover his heart was not yet satisfied; he sought for a deeper practical knowledge.

II. JNANAPURI

Shuddha came to Jnanapuri; it was at the foot of Shivagiri. Jnanananda, living up the Shivagiri, was famous for his knowledge, learning, and divine qualities. He was a man who rarely came out of his cave; he lived in samadhi and everything came

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to him. He accepted none as his disciple and never posed himself as a Guru. "I am what you are and You are what I am and both are Brahman", said he to all. Shuddha was meditating near the cave when a saint came and took him to Jnanananda. Shuddha worshipped the Sage's feet; but Jnanananda stopped him, lifted him, seated him by his side and said with a gentle but firm voice "No formality of Namaskar! I am what you are; you are myself; I know your life and its objects Shantamuni has already told me about you. Now to the purpose. You have wandered enough. You seek peace for all and harmony of communal life for humanity. This is the way; first leave off all search outside; seek within; meditate; find out your thought-centre; find out your true self in the heart; be that; be conscious of that in all. Then You are all and all are yourself. By inner communion all can realise this unique Spirit in all. No religion, no caste is necessary; every one can live a harmonious universalised life. Self-finding and self-expansion are the ways of harmony." Thus he went on clearly and originally explaining the secrets of Vedanta, Siddhanta and Yoga philosophies. Shuddha made great progress on the line and recorded all the teachings of Jnanananda and gave them in book form to seekers. Now his inner hunger was satisfied. There was a last lingering doubt in him. A link between actual life and spiritual bliss--that was his

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last research. He put his doubt before Jnanananda. The sage gave a description of the modern and the ancient Yogins and said "See Purnananda in Yogapuri".

12. YOGAPURI

Yogapuri was a dynamic centre of all systems of yoga. Shuddha was much benefited by going there. Purnaanda used to see devotees only in May. He was a silent man, a dynamic force in the town. But he was not easily approached. So Shuddha spent his days usefully with other Yogins. Some of them were Hatha Yogins who made their body and vital strong and shining by Asanas, Pranayama, internal cleaning and naturopathy. Some were Raja Yogins, experts in samyama and samadhi, masters of the mind. Some were Bhakti Yogins invoking the Divine Grace through prayer and Japam. Some were Karma Yogins who served the Divine in humanity. These were dynamic personalities who kept Yogapuri clean, neat, busy and beautiful and industrious. Some were Jnana Yogins who after self-finding trained seekers in meditation and self-reflection and taught them self-knowledge, Vedas etc. Shuddha already perfect in all these systems of yoga perfected further his knowledge. But none of these Yogins who lived a self-centred life could solve the riddle of existence. Shuddha saw Purnanada on the full-moon day.

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Ladies and gentlemen were meditating before him silently. After meditation, they concentrated themselves in their appointed works. Purnananda at once recognised Shuddha:

"I knew that you were coming" said he, "I was waiting for you. I have solved your problem here; you can see how my sadhaks live a perfect life in the Divine communion. They work, meditate, serve, and throughout the day they remember God and live in tune with Him. Shuddha enquired about the disciplines of this Yoga of Divine Communion or the life-transforming Yoga. Purna with great fervour and devotion recounted to him the glory of Sri Aurobindo, the perfect Master. He expounded the new life-transforming integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo at length and said "This is the Yoga that can harmonise and divinise mankind. Shuddha under Purnananda developed a new consciousness which enabled him to live Godlike in the busy world. Perfectly satisfied with his perfection, Shuddha was steeped within to hear the Divine command one day, when Shantamuni came there. Shanta was a friend of Purnananda. They two spoke very high of Shuddha and his attainments. "Follow me to the Himalayas directly; everything is ready for you there", said Shantamuni. Purna blessed him and offered to direct his spiritual power for the success of his mission. Shuddha followed Shanta to the Himalayas.

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13. YOGA SANGHAM

Shanta took Shuddha to Mt. Kailas; there they meditated for a month and then descended to Rishikesh and stayed with Shiva Yogi and with his blessings went to Kedarinath. From there Agastyachalam was five miles. It was the place where St. Agastya did tapasya. There stood the Ashram established by Shanta for Shuddha. It was not yet an organised one; the sadhaks did tapasya in caves and small huts and were scattered in different places. After leaving Siddhinagar Shanta came with his saints to Kashi. He despatched part of them to different pilgrim centres with instructions to pave the way and purify the atmosphere for the future work. With the rest he came to Agastyachlam and did penance for a time, and then started a centre of spiritual dynamism. Now Shuddha organised the whole group and established a powerful Yoga Nilayam to perfect souls for his mission. Shanta hailed him as the Master of the Nilayam; but Shuddha declined the offer and said "I am an eternal student and servant and a brother of all humanity. God was the sole Master of the world". After long meditation and Divine Communion, he spoke out of inspiration a new system of Yoga by which man and woman could live a perfect life of power, purity, harmony and beauty and develop intuition and genius for the universal service. They meditated with the leader for five hours, slept for five hours and

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were busy the rest of the day in physical, spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, dynamic and cultural developments. From poetry to mechanism, from cooking to shooting, they developed every art and science as a part of their Yoga. Every Yogi was a power-house of Divine Energy and a ray of particular genius. They formed a Spiritual Socialism in which all were equal power-centres of the Divine Will. Once Shuddha engaged them in a continuous meditation lasting five months. During that period of deep inner concentration, the Divine force of Shuddha descended into them. Shuddha Yogi waited for the opportune moment to begin his great work of redeeming humanity from the shadows of the hostile forces. He was sending his Yogic Power to Satyan in Danavam and Indira and Bharata in Siddhiagar. Let us now turn to these places.

CANTO FOUR: SATYAN AT DANAVAM

I. SATYAN'S VOYAGE

Shuddha after perfecting himself, radiates his force silently in all directions and effects an automatic reform and reawakening in the heart of humanity. In meditation he sees how his father is struggling to transform the asuric Danavas. He sends his Yogic force there. One day he was about to despatch a band of trained Yogis to help Saytan when Bhogamuni came and told

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him all that had happened in Danavam as follows:

Mohi the she-Mephistopheles of Kaliyan, adds fuel to his fiery jealousy by telling him how Shuddha is to be hailed by the saints as a saviour. "O mistress of my charms, contrive to do all harms to my rival with the skill of thy devilish art", cries Kali as he escapes in the plane followed by a few Danavas. She tells him about the gigantic physical and vital power of Mavali to thwart all spiritual forces. The Danavas cry "The world is ours; we have power to possess it, we shall conquer Kalinagar and Siddhi and dominate this Punya Bhumi, and convert it into Asura Bhumi". Just at this time, Satyan's plane overtakes them. He shoots down a plane. The asuras fall into the sea and the plane falls on the shore of Shyamala. But Kali and Mohi fly away and disappear. Satyan lands on the shores of Shyamala. There, its king Shantiman hails him as a saviour-hero and welcomes him to his fertile island. Shantiman knowing the mission of Satyan offers him ships, provisions and soldiers for the discovery of Danavam, for he too suffers often from the asuric air raids. Satyan sails round the world in a war-ship called Punyam; he visits the East Indies, Phillipines, China, Japan, Canada, United States, Brazil, Argentine, New York, British Isles, France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, Australia, etc., and sees the manners and customs of their men and women. All welcome him, tell him about the inroads of the

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Danavas but are ignorant of their place. Satyan, tired of long voyages and disappointments, entrusts himself to the almighty Power and drops anchor off the coast of the beautiful isle of Srikaram. With his adventurers he sings the glory of Shuddha Shakti and then tells them of the brave voyages of Columbus, Cook, Livingstone, etc., when king Srikara comes with his soldiers and welcomes him. Satyan tells him of all his romantic ordeals. Srikara in return recounts his experiences: His island is renowned for fair damsels and natural wealth. The wicked Danavas often descended on it and carried away ladies and wealth. His dear daughter Sundari was thus seduced by Mavali and forced to wed him. Srikara with the help of Bhogamuni, a holy mechanist and mantrasiddha, had fashioned a special aeroplane to reach Danavam. While they were talking thus, Bhogamuni came, recognised Satyan, and knew his purpose. Satyan surrendered himself to the great Siddha who initiated him in the Siddha Yoga which he practised for a few months. As a result, the old Satyan was completely transformed into a youth. Now none could recognise him. Satyan sends his men back to Siddhi with a letter to Indira, that he would come back victorious to help the work of Shuddha, then flies off with Bhoga in the new plane. Bhoga alone knows the path and the destiny. As the plane ploughs the sky, Bhoga gives an account of the Danavas and Mavali.

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2. DANAVAS

Danavam is the lower vital world of lust, greed, envy, egoism and evil passions. Danavas are its titanic inhabitants. They are the secret hostile forces that thwart all divine advents. Rama rooted out these asuric forces at Lanka and Krishna destroyed the rest. But a few escaped and occupied this vital Isle, dry, cold, bare, uncouth, and rocky where the howl of tempest and hell-cries of hungry wolves alone can be heard. The asuras died of cold and starvation. Only one woman was left. She was the Gloomy Maya. She ate the flesh of wolves and wandered seeking food for her lust. Adi Bhoga after traversing the world and doing tapasya in the Sahara, came to this isle for a change and meditated. Maya came thundering against him. On seeing him she fell in love with him and assumed a fair form to tempt him. Bhoga resisted her charms at first, but she embraced him violently and satisfied herself. Bhoga gave her children and for that she allowed him to go, without eating his flesh. Bhoga escaped saying "thy evil children shall perish when they do harm to the Punya Bhumi". Adi Bhoga came to Srikaram to expiate the sin of having lived with a Devil and continued his tapasya there. Our Bhogamuni is his spiritual progeny.

Maya's progeny increased into a nation of Danavas by illicit intercourse with women stolen from

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various countries. They multiplied like germs of an epidemic only to do evil, and dominate the world. After many lines of Danavas had come and gone, Simha rose to power. He stole Kamala from Kalinga and begot titanic children. Of them Mavali and Analan were terribly strong, indomitable asuras, tigers in anger, cobras in jealousy, and devils in ingenious mischief. They were skilful in wars, and lived only to injure others. Mavali succeeded his father like a tiger succeeding a wolf.

Analan, his brother, captured and ruled another land. "Surrender or die", said Mavali swinging his sword as he ascended the throne challenging the whole world with his weaponed force. He stole from Srikaram, Sundari, the fairest daughter of the king, and celebrated this forced marriage. But a lovely daughter was born of this union; her name was Shakti and *into her descended the Soul of Shuddha Gowri*. Mavali obeyed only the feminine charm of Sundari. His guru Shukracharya was a clever cunning greedy evil genius. He inflamed Mavali's lust for earth and power. Having said so far, Bhogamuni told Satyan the way in which he should conduct himself in the land of the Danavas. Satyan (now Meyyan) was to represent himself as a singer, a player on the Vina, and an actor, and nothing more. Bhoga will personate as a flutist and a mechanic.

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3. HORRIBLE SCENES

The plane lands on the shores of Danavam. They see some shepherds, learn some useful information from them and enter the city, hiding their plane in a secret place. Our artist and mechanic watch the night activities of the Danavas, who fly by air to plunder and carry on their nefarious activities in distant countries. Some return from their plunder with wealth and women. Some sail for piracy. Some are seen with bloody swords. They see carnivals, dazzling casinos, bacchanal feasts, drunken bouts, voluptuous mixture of either sex, lovers' quarrels, liquor shops, butchereries. They hear piteous cries of dying animals, and gossip of whores; they hear blustering boanerges ranting agnostic slogans upon platforms. They love matter and laugh at the spirit. 'Muscle is might and might is right' is their slogan. Their very breath is jealousy. Their form is vital egoism. To kill and rule is their business. To divide and conquer is their trick. Seeing thus, with aching heart, the life of the Danavas, the new comers go around, when suddenly a thick fog covers the night as if nature is ashamed to see these shameless sights. Satyan and Bhoga struggle and stumble through the gloom, and take shelter in a pial.

After an hour, the fog clears: a procession of titans passes by with big guns and cannons shouting "Kill

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and rule! The world is ours! We shall conquer Bharata and stamp out God and religion!" They marched for the embarkment. Satyan was dismayed. Bhoga explained that Kali had sought the help of Mavali to reconquer India. As they were talking thus a Danava spy came, arrested them, and dragged them to prison. That was the first respect shown to strangers in this land!

Bhoga strikes at a plan of escape. He teaches Satyan a song dear to Sundari. Satyan sings while Bhoga plays the flute. The spies hear the song and report to the king. King Mavali shows it to Sundari and she at once finds out the presence of her Guru. She sends a secret messenger to him and tells him to be prepared to play the Vina the next day. She requests Mavali to release the artists and hear their song. He does so. The artists first come to Sundari and she takes them to a secret chamber, and exchanges heart and words. Sundari after the birth of Shakti lived separately from Mavali since he defiled himself by debauchery and uncontrolled lust. She told them all her adventures. She welcomed their advent which would help her task of redeeming the sinful asuras from the path of wanton evil. She tells them they must first win his heart through art and music. They keep strict secrecy about everything.

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4. THE TITAN'S BOAST

Mavali, the titan, holds his court in great pride and pomp. His minister Dhunmati, Guru Shukra, messenger Vakra, Commander Nasha Kirti, spy Visiddhan, Economic minister Dhumaketu, Educational minister Madhumati, Armament minister Kala Pasan, sister Mohi and brother-in-law Kaliyan, etc., are sitting in front of him. Karalan represents his brother, Analan, the king of Anavam. Mavali conspires with all to conquer the world, East and West. Mavali stands blustering out his self-elated boasting, his scientific achievements, his superiority over God whom men blindly worship, his will to power, his strength to dominate over both earth and heaven; his resolve to stamp out spirituality, his faith in materialism and pragmatism; his store of ammunitions and dynamite, ships, planes, petrol, coal, iron, gold and silver; he ridicules truth, chastity, divinity and equality. "I shall conquer heaven with my air force, seas with my ships, land with my cannons, and the nether-worlds with my submarines and spirit with matter. The world is mine and all who oppose my will, do it at the risk of their life", says he as he turns to conspire with his ministers to conquer East and West. "West is materialistic; brain develops there at the cost of the heart. Make coal and iron and petrol more important than God and morality there. Introduce

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fresh weapons of war and never allow people to love one another; sow there hatred, egoism, cupidity, selfish arrogance, in the name of patriotism. The East is God-mad; sow there the dividing and demoralising forces of caste, illusion, envy, treachery, etc.", says the Demon. Kali stands up and pleads for the thorough demoralisation of the Punya Bhumi in order to nullify the spiritual force of Shuddha and the saints. Mavali boasts that he would conquer it with his sword and diplomacy. Shukra traces the history of Bharata and its mighty spiritual force. The land of Shivaji cannot easily succumb to the sword. By capturing its market and industry, by sowing agnosticism and immorality, by disintegrating the social solidarity, by dividing and weakening the race by religious bias, caste prejudice, untouchability, sectarianism, slavish mentality, slavery, early marriage, forced widowhood, unmanly woman education; by creating personal animosities, by diverting the mind of the people to our ways of eating and drinking—the Punya Bhumi can be devitalised, impoverished and degenerated and rendered easy for our possession", says Shukra (Silver). Mavali appoints Kali, Mohi and Vikalpa to do these demoralising works in the Punya Bhumi, and gives them all the necessary materials and troops. He sets Kalapasha to sow war-mania and greed in the West. He commands Nasha Kirti to manufacture war materials. Kali gives an exaggerated report of the siege of Kalinagar and

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Siddhi, and wants to wreak vengeance on Satyan and Shuddha. Mavali gives him enough spies to discover both, and well-armed asuric troops to kill them. Kali is to depart for Bharata with his evil forces when Sundari announces a music party. "After Pleasure" says the King and at once the Pleasure Hall opens.

There Mavali and other Danavas, Kali and Mohi and a lot of lecherous ladies drink, rave, dance, sing, embrace, quarrel, kiss, love, hate, and reel down tired of this revelry. Sundari enters now and introduces the artists. "Sing a song to please my mind", commands the intoxicated king. Bhoga plays the flute, Satyan sings and plays on the Vina "Paradise lost and regained or Satan's Work". Mavali admires Satan's challenge to God and his bold hell-life and enticement of Eve; but gets angry when Jesus says "Get thee behind me, Satan!" "I am Satan! I say get thee behind me you God and Jesus", raves the drunken autocrat. Kali and Mohi sing a song deriding Punya Bhumi. From that Satyan imagines what Kali is about to do. Mavali asks the musicians to sing war songs. They sing the battle of Troy. The music pleases him. Shakti takes this opportunity to express her desire to learn music. Mavali grants it and commands the artists to teach her heroic songs and never holy hymns. He warns them not to interfere in politics, not to worship any God except him.

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5. "I AM GOWRI"

The artists agree and leave the hall with Sundari and Shakti. They all stay in Sundari's mansion. Satyan feels uneasy over the conspiracy of Kali-Mohi. He sings the glory of the Punya Bhumi and its spiritual magnanimity, and sorrows over the misdeeds of Kali. Shakti is inspired by the song. She says, "Fear not, Sir! I am Gowri! From the battle-field I have come here to conquer the hostile forces and carry victory to my Lord Shuddha! He is the beacon of love, light and purity. He lives in me. I live in Him. Kali and his vampires shall be shamefully defeated! Be sure! Have courage!" Satyan regains hope and fondles the lovely Shakti and verifies the presence of Gowri-Shuddha in her. He teaches her the Vina and singing, and many other arts, and also the spiritual lore which she specially likes. Mavali watches them through spies. But Bhoga hoodwinks them by singing battle songs. Mavali appreciates such songs, and one day preaches to them his materialism. Satyan allows him to speak out and remains quiet. Shakti learns music and the Vina perfectly.

6. THE ART ACADEMY

Bhoga and Satyan ask her to get permission from the King to start a college of fine arts. That is done

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for the pleasure of His Asuric Majesty. Bhoga gets professors from all parts of the world, Srikaram, Punya Bhumi, etc. All of them become associates of Satyan in fulfilling his mission. Danavas and Danavis are attracted to fine arts. The tunes sung by the artists melt the adamant heart of Mavali; he gives a palatial building for the Fine Arts Academy, in a beautiful hill tract far from the busy capital. Shakti often entertains her father with heroic songs, and he encourages the Academy more and more. He adds a beautiful garden to the building finely situated at the foot of the Golden Hill. A Diamond river sings nearby. In this art-temple, the Danavas and their ladies feel new freedom and joy. First, ladies who are mostly women from other countries become enamoured of the place and the songful life of the Academy. Their number increases day by day. Satyan often enacts plays of moral value. Ladies gently change the life of their husbands and parents. Their influence progressively transforms others. Satyan begins regular moral training to all devoted members of the Art temple. First he makes them take only vegetarian food, then he makes them feel that killing and eating the animal is an inhuman, sinful habit. The ladies leave off flesh-eating, and their persistence makes their husbands become vegetarians. Ladies refuse to cook fish and flesh. Next Satyan introduces temperance. Many leave off drink, and taverns become vacant. Then

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Satyan induces the ladies never to enter pleasure halls; he shows them the hygienic effect of chastity. Pleasure halls no more interest members of the Art-temple. Then devotional songs and moral teachings begin. Then Satyan begins meditation. During the meditation, they feel the descent of Shuddha Shakti. Their concentration increases day by day, and they take greater and greater delight in spiritual sadhanas. They slowly conquer the mind, fix it in the heart and feel a new strength and joy. Shakti, being the soul of Gowri, quickly attains perfection in Yoga and next Sundari. Both train the ladies. Inner communion and pure devotion come to them naturally, day by day. Asuric nature leaves them at last, and they love the Divine, and the Divine nature embodied in Shuddha. Bhogamuni starts mechanics and day by day manufactures radio sets, telephones, gramophones, small planes, motors, etc., for the future work, and hides them in a secret place. He starts a radio communication with certain important friends. He gets the news of Shuddha and Kaliyan every day. When Mavali visits, he stages war-like plots to please him. Mavali now busy otherwise, leaves the artists to go on freely. So the work of the Art temple increases and it spreads to Anavam also where King Analan welcomes it. Thus the spiritualising zeal of Satyan and Bhoga brings under his influence crores of people. They get communications from Shuddha in meditation.

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To day the command is to start a Spiritual association. Satyan and Bhoga, Shakti and Sundari (hence we shall call them the Four) start the sangham and create branches throughout the land. Volunteers are sent to every village to train more volunteers. Analan builds an Art-temple and endows enormous wealth. He likes the movement and becomes a close friend of the four. Analan rivals his brother to possess Sundari; still he loves her, and his patronage of the Art-temple is secretly stained by that love. He also becomes the political rival of his brother in all lands. So the fire of envy burns away brotherly affections.

7. ASURA'S RAGE

Dunmati views the Art activities with suspicion. He sees that popular movement, purifying Danavam and nullifying asuric ways of life and thought. Evils cease, none drinks, eats flesh, or enters ball rooms. He carries dangerous tales against the Four, and infuriates Mavali by saying that they are political conspirators, and allies of Analam, and that they are hatching a plot against his sovereignty. Spies give all sorts of false reports about the Sangham branches and its activities in Anavam. Mavali gets enraged, and charges the Four with having broken the laws of Danavdom. Sundari replies boldly that they do only what every reasonable being would understand as

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just and proper. One day while the Sangham was peacefully meditating after devotional songs, Mavali breaks into the hall full drunk and threatens to shoot them all. Shakti stands boldly before his gun and argues with him. Suddenly some power miraculously attacks the asura who tumbles down and swoons. His retinue stand in dismay; they quickly remove the king to his palace. Bhoga tells the Sangham the story of a *Mahatma Yogi* who single-handed, defied and defeated the demons who tyrannised over Srikaram. The devotees take a vow to follow the same method to bring down the egoism of Mavali. Mavali waking up from his swoon pours all his evil rage upon the two artists, Sundari and Shakti. Dunmati enrages him further by saying that they were spies of Analan, that Sundari spurns him since Analan loves him, and he proves that the Art-league is financed by Analan and other enemy kings. It is true that many rich men help Satyan in order to defy Mavali. Mavali at once arrests and imprisons Bhoga and Satyan. Shakti and Sundari demand their immediate release and honourable treatment.

WAR FLARES UP

Mavali sends Sundari to prison, charging her with sedition and secret intercourse with his enemy, Analan. This enrages the whole island. Shakti begins

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her peaceful war. She takes a vow of fast and sits under a tree in front of the prison singing and playing on the Vina to the glory of Shuddha. Her fast moves the heart of the women. They refuse to serve their husbands unless the good souls are freed. This news reaches Analan who demands the release of the good souls and threatens to wage war. Mavali suspects a revolution and persecutes the prisoners and the artists further. He intimidates Shakti by pointing the cannon. The mob breaks the prison doors at this juncture, and the prisoners escape. Mavali orders wholesale massacre. Danava soldiers fire the first shot, when pamphlets fall and with them bombs from Anala's planes. "I declare war against you, unjust Mavali, since you ill-treated and murdered innocent souls! Dear tyrant! Your throne shall be mine", said the pamphlet. It also said that the strange Meiyen, the singer was Satyan and the flutist was the great Bhoga, the teacher of Sundari. Mavali plunged into a bloody war with his envious brother. He sought to shoot Satyan, Sundari, etc., but could not find them.

9. ESCAPE

Satyan and Bhogan had already contrived to send messages by a new radio device to Analan. They instigated the war and internal revolution; as soon as the prison bars were shattered by the mob, they

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escaped in the dress of Danava soldiers, found their plane, took Sundari and Shakti (dressed as men) in it, and flew off to Anavam where Analan received them.

Satyan gave Analan a new plan of action, and helped him in every way. But Analan could not control his lust for Sundari. He loved Shakti too. One mid-night the drunken asura behaved indecently; Satyan pushed him away and saved the ladies. The asura vowed to conquer the land of Satyan and enslave his wife and son. Satyan felt the danger of remaining with an asura. He had already learnt to forge many subtle weapons. He, Bhoga, Sundari, Shakti with two other friends suddenly took a fast plane and disappeared: they had already sent a message to Sri-karan. The father eagerly awaited his daughter Sundari. The plane landed, and Srikanan greeted all the dear ones, the King of Punya Bhumi and the Bhogamuni with great ovation, and heard of their adventures. Satyan sent Bhoga to Shuddha with messages of his welfare and that of Shakti Gowri of whom he wrote a long account.

In the meantime Satyan learns that Kali with his evil forces had already reconquered the country and established his immoral kingdom. Mavali, envious of him, sends Dhumaketu with mechanised forces to imprison Kali, to marry Mohi and reign over the land as his viceroy.

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CANTO FIVE—SHUDDHA SHAKTI

I. KALI CHANGES

On Shuddha's birthday the sadhaks sing thrilling hymns and meditate, when Bhoga comes and tells what has passed in Danavam. Then comes Bharata Muni and Siddhiman to call him back to Siddhinagar. They tell him the tragedy of Kalinagar. Mavali sends Dhumaketu, and he comes with dangerous weapons. First he enters Kalinagar saying that all weapons are for his war with Siddhi. Kali gladly receives him; but the treacherous Dhumaketu seduces Mohi gently; and suddenly captures and imprisons Kali, usurps the throne of Kalinagar. Mohi deserts Kali and lives as the queen of Dhumaketu. The faithless demon now wants to kill Kali. Kali's heart rages for, vengeance; Dhumaketu and Mohi devastate the land immoralise men and women, plunder public property, enslave the country and continue their reign of black tyranny for five years. Punya Bhumi becomes Papa Bhumi emaciated by sin, starvation and ignorance. Shuddha sheds tears for the degradation of his country, and enquires about the steps taken by Siddhiman against the tyrant. Siddhiman thrice repulsed the attack of Dhumaketu and attacked him four times. Kali repented and changed into a devotee of Shuddha. Siddhiman secretly managed his release. Kali rebelled against Dhuma. One night he stole

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into the bedchamber of Mohi and stabbed her to death. Then he roused the people against the agent of the treacherous Mavali and defied him. Kali then surrendered to Siddhiman who took him to Shuddha. Kalinagar came under the sway of Siddhiman and order was restored again. But the Time-spirit struggled still with the asuric nature.

2. YOGA SIDDHI

As Shuddha was hearing this history, Srikanan and Shakti landed from their plane. Shuddha at once recognised his Gowri in Shakti and treated her with great love and respect. Then all meditated for an hour; Shuddha requested them to contemplate for a week in seclusion, and find one immortal truth from their long experience, a truth that would harmonise and divinise humanity. All the saints and the new comers do likewise and gather again in the moon light. They sing a hymn and meditate upon the pure Divine, then each reveals the truth realised in his trance; Shuddha writes it at once into a couplet. Thus four hundred saints reveal four hundred truths and Shuddha adds five and collects all into a holy book entitled Yoga Siddhi. Purity, freedom, equality—perfect life in the Divine communion—this is the central spirit of the book. It is divided into twelve main Treatises, and each treatise is subdivided into five

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or ten chapters. Each chapter has five couplets, each is full of meaning and a message for life. God, the World, Dharma, Knowledge, Universal Love, Conduct and Character, Wedded Life, Family, Industry, Spiritual Socialism, Politics, Shuddha Yoga, Perfection in Yogic Life—these are the main treatises under which all the conceivable subjects useful to humanity are arranged.

Shuddha expounds Yoga Siddhi and trains missionaries for its propaganda. Shakti meditates with him and receives his Divine Power for the great work ahead.

The whole Shuddha Sangham lives the Yoga Siddhi and Shuddha radiates a special Force, to purify and liberate humanity for his further work. Things quickly change; minds transform; events take a new turn, by the Yoga Shakti radiated from the Hymalayan Centre. The vital world collapses.

3. TWELVE BRANCHES

One auspicious day, Shuddha divides his spiritual Sangham into twelve branches and sends it abroad for twelve definite services—to create faith in God, to show how to live in tune with nature, to give proper education, to reveal Dharma, to spread universal love and harmony, to promote good conduct and build character, to encourage Brahmacharya Culture and then a healthy married life, to show how to maintain

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ideal family relations, to create good industries and strike at the root of poverty, to annul despotism, liberate humanity, and establish Spiritual Socialism, to purify and energise men and women by Yogic Culture, to conduct prayers and meditations, and at last to transform them into perfect divinities, and divinise life and heavenise earth. Shakti leads the spiritual soldiers, and organises all branches of works with the help of Shanta, Bharata, Siddhiman and other great souls.

The new reform starts first in Siddhinagar where Indira efficiently rules. The Yoga Siddhas go all over the world, and counteract the evils done by Mavali and Anala. A new consciousness blossoms and people, soul-free, rise up to oppose the asuric influences. Mavali is informed by Dhumaketu, Vikalpa and others, about the activities of Shuddha. He orders his asuric generals to shoot and bomb as they like, and kill Shuddha and his rebellious host. Dhumaketu passes restrictive orders; none obeys; he persecutes; none fears. People of Kalinagar at the head of Kali (now transformed), rise up and imprison him. All the wicked agents of Mavali feel a tremor, a fear, a superhuman presence. They are boycotted; no flesh, no drink, no more voluptuous games; they starve, they beg, they cringe, they find now that they are only strangers. They surrender at last to Siddhi. Kali surrenders to Shuddha and becomes Kalyan again.

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4. VICTORY

Satyan and Sundari again begin their work with a new spiritual power and with the help of Shuddha Yogins. They organise peace propaganda. Soldiers join them, and refuse to shed blood in wars. The two asuras try to intimidate; but there is none to fear them. The world refuses to supply them iron, petrol, coal etc. Labourers do not co-operate. Shuddha had already circulated the story of Mahatmanath which the Yogins sang and expounded everywhere. It gave them a new vigour and also the life of the patriots who liberated India, America, France, Russia etc. Lenin inspires them, Washington gives them new courage. The citizens of Danavam revolt and establish an *imperium in imperio*; similarly the citizens of Anavam establish a republic. Mavali and Analan fight tooth and nail; both are injured. Analan is no more; Mavali flies for his life but Danavam refuses to shelter him. Sundari sends him to Kalinagar; he goes there with the fond hope of ruling over Punya Bhumi; but Dhumaketu, the prisoner, advises him to surrender to Shuddha; at first he would not; he is enraged to see his daughter, his Shakti helping Shuddha and leading his Sangha; he comes to kill her; but a force humbles his vital egoism; he surrenders to Shuddha, repents his asuric folly, and takes active part in Shuddha Sangham work. He

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becomes a good engineer. Satyan also comes with victory. Anavam and Danavam become Srikaran's territory and they are called Sundaripuram and Satyapuram, named after their saviours. Sundari now really loves the transformed Mavali. Shakti now recognises her father. Siddhiman invites Shuddha to Siddhipuri where all nations have gathered to acclaim him as the Saviour and Emperor. Shuddha comes as the victorious Indra with Shakti. The universal victory day is celebrated in the Gowri Mahal of Siddhipuri, under a richly decorated pavilion. Shuddha takes Shakti as his life companion. She says pointing to the place, "Here I fell and here I rise again" for Thee, O Lord!" All nations, all great souls, bless Shuddha and Shakti. They offer him a magnificent crown. But Shuddha politely refuses to wear the crown and delivers an inspired message which has a thrilling effect on humanity. It was radioed throughout the world and circulated at once among all nations. It was a charter of perfect freedom to humanity to lead a pure self-conscious equal-visioned life without any caste, creed, race or colour difference, without any fear of a despot, following the Gospel of the Yoga Siddhi. Yoga Siddhi was sung that day in a thrilling chorus by saints and patriots.

After this universal victory Shuddha and Shakti visit several countries taking the Gospel of Yoga Siddhi, and prepare humanity for a divinised life. They

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universalise Yogic life. They make the whole world meditate at a particular hour and radiate Divine energy. They make every brain develop useful arts, every hand do good and useful work for humanity for six hours and share the fruit in common; they industrialise wealth, socialise life, and spiritualise humanity. They divinise every detail of life. Men become lights of divinity and women dynamos of Divine Energy. Sex life is limited to procreation. Men and women live to perfect each other like love and light, sun and rays. Humanity is reborn into the delight of Life Divine.

The mission is fulfilled; the advent is crowned with victory; Supermen celebrate Shuddha's birth day with high delight. Shuddha and Shakti meditate in the congregation. Shuddha delivers his last message:

Live all, under the canopy of God
Brimful of bliss and light spreading abroad!

Deep trance! A white radiance! Shuddha and Shakti disappear into it! Bharata Shakti shines forth! A voice is heard, "Live equal-visioned children, in freedom of consciousness as immortal rays of my spirit!"

This is the main trend of the great Epic of Supermen, Bharata Shakti.

XX. BHARATIAR'S ENGLISH POETRY

SOME years ago, there was a controversy in the daily press about the aesthetical and national value of English poetry by Indians. The late Mr. Justice Seshagiri Iyer and the late Mr. P. Seshadri of the Benares Hindu University, others and I took part in it. It was fought out with both heat and light as well. Though today has no interest in the fights of yesterday and though tomorrow will have no interest in the fights of today, yet that particular controversy has a value beyond its day.

English poetry has had a large place in our national life and in our literature, in the closing years of the last century and the early decades of this century. The new passion of nationalism and patriotism and democracy, the new sense of all-India unity, the new-born zest in life, the new sense of beauty lavished by God on life in superb bounty and abundance, the new sense of the bewitching beauty of women, the new sense of the thrills and ecstasies of love, the new sense of the divinity of childhood, and the romance of youth, and other master passions born of the clash of cultures of the East and the West surged in the hearts of the *intelligentsia*

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of India, clamorously sought expression in literature and art. Sanskrit had ceased to be a living medium of expression, and had fashioned rigid moulds of sentiment and idea, which were not suited to the white heat of new emotions. The regional languages of India had, some of them, reached great heights of expressiveness in the field of religious literature, but were not yet plastic enough for the new impetuous ideas. These ideas could have only one outlet, and that was through the medium of English. The poetry of Toru Dutt and Sarojini Devi and others, yet later, translations of Rabindranath Tagore, gave us masterpieces which were due to the blending of the potencies of the old and the new aesthetical urges in the national mind and heart. Though now a host of writers led by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Madhusoodan Dutt and recently by the supreme poet Rabindranath Tagore in Bengal and Subrahmania Bharati in Tamil Nad, and others elsewhere, have by the magic of their genius given new potency, plasticity and power to the modern Indian languages, yet even now English Poetry by Indians continues to express the new urges of the national heart and to fill a worthy place in the national life.

But it is by no means easy to be a great poet in the English tongue. English prosody is so easy and English rhetoric is so simple that it looks as if any one can write poetry with ease and success in English.

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But in reality the very ease in writing it is a danger and a snare. The English blank verse looks very easy to write. Mere prose with capital letter popping up at every eleventh syllable cannot be poetry. A genuine poetry must have the subtlety of rhythm, sonorousness of phrase, splendour of style and sweetness of sentiment. The heroic couplet is very easy to write but is often mere seesaw and mere twaddle. The other metrical patterns are a little more difficult to write but are not difficult in reality and can easily be mastered. But few can attain that union of profundity of thought, and magical felicity of style which alone can lift metrical composition to the height of pure poetry.

The Yogi being a born poet, whose lips have been touched by the Divine Fire, has done fine work in the realms of English and French Poesy, though they are no comparison to his perfectly flawless and profound Tamil poetry.

His English poems have been collected in a volume called *The Heart Sings*. The work is a limpid music of the soul.

The most impressive of his English poems are those in which his poetic and spiritual soul yearns for a New Era of peace and goodwill among men. He urges mankind to establish the kingdom of God upon the earth. The key-note is struck in the first poem: "SING, O BIRD!"

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Wake up and sing, O Bird of Bliss!
New Dawn kisses thy nest;
Sing songs of Divine ecstasies
Uniting East and West!

Heavenly beauty lights thy home
With smiles of new-born day.
A blooming joy dispels the gloom
Of doleful yesterday.

Heal the heart of the multitude,
O touch of magic balm;
Pouring from thy beatitude
Soul-raptures, sweet and calm.

I may refer here to a few other poems in which a similar note is struck:

The world of bombs and torpedoes
And wars of I and mine—
This world's a wilderness of woes
O how shall it be thine?

Bring us, O Truth, a pure message
Of hope and rectitude.
Bring us a perfect golden age
Of love and sanctitude.

Let all the human race
Know Thee as life of life;
Let Thy love set ablaze,
End all communal strife.

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Let me live, O my Lord,
By Thee, for Thee, in Thee
Let me work, O my God
To bring Thy Kingdom free.

The poet's style is clear, simple, limpid, straight and musical.

Another frequent note is the grand spiritual unity of all things, the pure infinite eternal ecstasy of the soul:

Beyond the four, beyond the five,
Beyond the six, I roam;
Beyond the seven I soar and live
Without a mortal form.
All live in me; I live in all;
By nature, I am blissful peace.

With none did I divide my days
Except thy holy looks;
I never sped the common ways;
Within, I found my books.

* * *

Let me be, O Cosmic Wonder,
In Thy dynamic sea, a wave!

His songs on Love Divine are quite enjoyable:

Thy Lord, I am, O maid!
Come, soul of serene charms.
Why art thou still afraid?
O come into my arms!

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In thy bright blushing cheek
Let me imprint my love;
Be sincere and meek;
Be gentle like a dove.

For Thee, I keep me young,
Immortal, stream of bliss;
How can my mind and tongue,
Describe Thy holy kiss?

A benediction comes again
And again like summer rain.

Like a moon-lit lily
I shall remain entranced
In His love consciously,
A spirit bliss-embraced.

To the Yogi-Poet, Nature is but a garment of God
and is a symbol and shrine of His Splendour: The
poem *Hail Nature* utters a profound experience:

Hail Nature, Mother, Power of God,
Immortal evidence
From man to worm, from sky to clod
Of His omnipresence.

Thou art the mighty energy
Plying the cosmic wheel;
Thy labour knows no lethargy,
O Worker full of zeal!

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All things have their birth and rebirth
In Thy secret delight.
Ether, air, sun, fire, water, earth,
Seasons, day and night.

To know and act thy will is ease;
To slight thee is disease;
To live in tune with thee is peace,
To follow thee, release.

Hail, Goddess of Health and healing !
Thy help is always near;
Strong in true love and faith we cling
To Thee, Thy children dear.

Another poem entitled "To The Mother" strikes
a similar endearing note:

The Mother pours Her love
Upon the passive child;
Cease all this strain of will;
She sees your life fulfilled.

The cosmic conscience of the illumined poet is
felt very often in his lines:

I see God, as I see the world;
Come, I shall show you friend!
Leave off thy logic and behold
Within and all around.

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The heart of midnight calm and mute
Murmurs a song of peace;
The morning plays a mystic flute
To rising golden grace!

Who lights the chambers from above?
Who sings to thee from sea?
Tell me who is the Lord of Love
That enjoys thy beauty?

Tell me, tell me, O lovely Spring,
Who clad thee green and gold.
Tell me who smiles in thy morning
And who peeps through thy threshold?

Unite our hearts and minds, O Force
Like rays in rising Sun;
Let each of us be universe,
For thy play, unique One.

In a poem on "The Spirit of Thyagaraja" Bharatiar describes how he sat by the temple of that supreme singer and felt an exultation of soul.

One serene day I sat alone
Under that peaceful vault.
Its mystic silence had a tone;
Its air, a touch occult.

The poet feels himself a boy among boys:

Who am I? Can you say,
O lovely boys at play!

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I am also a boy,
Like you; my name is Joy.

* * *

Now tell me who am I;
Look up; who is that sky?
Tell me who are you, first;
And you will know me next.

Poems containing Bharatiar's prayers to God and
His Shakti are simple and lovely:

I am a simple child
And simple words I speak;
To thee, I gently yield
O Mother, whom I seek.

I see thy lovely hands
Feeding my humble soul;
While I play on sea sands,
I hear thy tender call.

* * *

To follow thy sweet will
And serve thee is my right;
Beyond this I am nil,
Mother of my delight.

Here is an English rendering of one of his popular
lyrics:

Tune the Vina of Existence in full harmony,
Universal Master, and shower music-nectar!

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Let me fulfil my life in the ecstasy of singing.
Hail Lord of eternal bliss, beatitude and peace!
Hail, O destroyer of sins and giver of all boons!
Tune the Vina of my existence, Universal Master!
Strike the gamuts of this harp,
Now like the chorus of birds at the point of dawn,
Now like the rapturous heart of the surging sea,
Now like the gentle breeze kissing blossoms,
And now murmuring like intoxicated bees.
Lord, let my music soul dance with thy jingling feet!
Let my symphonies move in melodious time,
Now rapid like the mountain torrent,
Now like the gentle music of the spheres rolling
in the sky.
Tune the Vina of my existence, Universal Master!

There are certain poems deep in thought and sentiments in which the Inner Divine speaks to the doubting Soul and makes it hopeful. I shall quote one such poem and close this chapter:

BELOVED BOATMAN!

SOUL

We escaped vital stress and strife,
O divine Boatman of my life!
This dark frowning flood, can we clear my dear?
Remove my doubt and my fear.
This shore is red with bloody war.

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The stormy sea is wide afar;
Can this frail bark take us across
While Time frowns and fortune is cross?

BOATMAN

Fear is false and death is nought;
Worse adversaries we have fought.
Be not afraid, my lovely heart,
Dare this fury, throw back her dart;
The storm-play of this darkest sea
Need not cause anxiety in thee.
I hear a new song of hope;
Lightning dances with wider scope;
The trumpet of my challenge blows
Louder than these war-tongued billows.
Fear not, my love is homed in thee;
Fear not, O Gem, bejewelled in me.
I am, thou art; and love is there
We shall be triumphant ev'rywhere;

SOUL

No more fear, my beloved,
While Thou art here by my side;
But can our troubles be removed
As to that shore, we stem this tide?
O can these scandalous tongues cease
At the breath of that grove of peace?

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BOATMAN

Behold, the shadows of dismay
Shatter before the Smiling day;
A charming Grace pervades the skies;
Thou art That in human disguise.
A joy bursts out of misery,
A new bliss kisses our ferry.
See, the golden shore welcomes us
With a calm and thrilling chorus.
This heaven on earth is blameless
Free, free, let's ramble here timeless—
Like winged-dreams in an inspired poet
Soul, I am God; life's our duet;

XXI. BHARATIAR'S FRENCH POETRY

BHARATIAR has written many French poems as well. Some of them were seen and appreciated by French savants like the great artist Romain Rolland. All of them are highly spiritual poems in which the poet offers himself and his heart and art to the supreme Master of his soul. They are also streams of inner communion with the Divine Mother. I shall quote a few lines here, with the English translation by the poet, to express finally, the supreme aspiration of his heart and art.

Chante, Océan de ma joie, ô quel matin heureux!
 L'âge noir est perdu. La lumière des dieux
 Allume en l'univers, sa splendeur séraphique!
 Que de fleurs de bonheur! Que de parfum rythmique!
 L'haleine ambrosiaque enivre l'Existence!
 Chantez, jolis oiseaux, l'hymne de renaissance!
 Du bleu lotus d'azur, les pollens flamboyants
 Fécondent nos jardins de fruits brillants!
 La vie est un hymen de l'âme avec le Dieu
 Dont chacun est l'image; et le cœur un saint lieu!

YOGI SUDDHANANDA BHARATI

Sing lovely birds! O what a happy morn!
The age of gloom is gone. The light of gods
Lights the world with its seraphic splendour.
Joyful blossoms respire rhythmic perfume.
Ambrosial breath intoxicates the life;
Chant, O sweet birds, the hymns of renaissance.
Flamboyant pollens of the azure-lotus
Fecundate our gardens rich with rubied fruits.
Life is a wedlock of the soul with God.
Each one is his image, each heart His seat

Ta main, gouvernail, dirigeant
Ce navire, et ta douce voix
Qui d'un haut, dans mon cœur descend,
Ton œil par lequel mon œil voit,
Ton sceptre, ô Maître conquérant
O Ton sourire qui me dore,
Sont sculptés dans mon cœur Amant,
Soleil de la nouvelle Aurore!

Thy hand like rudder directing this ship,
Thy sweet voice descending into me from above,
Thy sight by which my eyes see things around,
Thy conquering sceptre ruling over the world,
Thy winning smile engoldening my life,
Are sculptured in my heart, Beloved,
Sun of the New Dawn!

Dans la mer de l'éther vibrant
Les sphères nagent par ta loi.

BHARATIAR'S FRENCH POETRY

Dans les animaux respirant
Tu vis comme l'unique Soi.
Sur le cheval du temps volant
Je Te vois. ...Le beau ciel T'honore.
Mon esprit comme un diamant
Se pose sur Ton front, Amant,
Eclaire mon cœur, Je T'implore,
Soleil de la nouvelle Aurore!

In vibrant sea of ether, spheres swim by thy law;
In breathing lives Thou livest, Unique Self!
Thou ridest the flying horse of Time;
Heaven honours Thee;
I pose my Spirit on thy crown, like a diamond;
Enlighten my heart, I pray Thee, Beloved,
Glorious Sun of the New Dawn.

L'ASPIRATION

Que ta voix coule dans ma flûte;
Que ta grâce inspire mon art!
Fixe sur moi ton doux regard,
Splendeur de la céleste voûte!

Que ta paix couronne mon âme;
Vérité qui est ma substance,
Allume ta divine flamme
Dans l'esprit et son éloquence!

Je veux planer sur la hauteur
Du beau Parnasse de tes gloires!
Donne l'aile à ma grande ardeur!

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

Que ton frais sourire flamboie
Sur le chemin de nos victoires;
Que la vie soit un flot de joie!

ASPIRATION

Let thy voice flow through my flute.
Let thy grace inspire my art.
Fix upon me sweet regard;
Celestial Splendour, salute!

Light my mind and eloquence
With thy divine flame in full;
Hail Truth that art my substance,
Let thy pure peace crown my soul!

I would soar Parnassian heights
Singing thy divine glories;
Add wings to my ardent flights!

Let thy smile shed charming light
On our way to victories!
Feed life with floods of delight!

XXII. CONCLUSION

SUCH has been the poetic achievements of Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar. His genius has much in common with that of Rabindranath Tagore. Both have a wonderful lyrical gift. Both have a deep religious passion and fervour. Both have given to the world deeply moving poetry of patriotism. Both felt the urge of poetry early in life having a remarkable vitality and versatility. The output of both is varied, luminous and voluminous. Tagore has done outstanding work in the fields of drama and fiction. Shuddhananda had plumbed the spiritual depths of yoga, and shows an ampler plenitude of poetic achievement.

Bharatiar is just fifty years of age, and his life, of austerity and spirituality has enabled him to carry his years lightly with ease and grace. He has done much and can do more and is sure to win fresh laurels in the realm of poetry in the days to come. This is a great year for India. The hour of destiny is striking. Unity and independence are God's gifts to her in the age of renaissance. What greater praise can there be to an Indian Poet than that he is a maker of the

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

modern, free, united, federal, democratic, prosperous India; that he is a shining light of India's renaissance. Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar has the splendour of service as his achievement, and has made the world realise that India is the spiritual Guide of the world, and has brought that fact before our vision through a Mahakavya. May he live long and

Be a priest to us all
Of the wonder and bloom of the world.

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ॐ विश्वे

गुरुकुल

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